



August 2022 Newsletter

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to friends who might be interested in knowing about Five Cities Orchid Society and encourage them to subscribe at www.fcoss.org



From the President's Potting Bench:

I hope everyone is having a good summer.

I have found my growing space has become somewhat limited, and have begun a massive repotting project this year to organize my plants. So, what do you do when you have too many orchids? Give some away, donate to the FCOS auction and focus on smaller plants. My most recent acquisitions from Sunset Valley Orchids are new compact Cattleya hybrids. I was intrigued by these as they have the advantages of being smaller plants, having multiple blooming times per year while retaining the form and color of large Cattleyas. Several of my mini Cattleyas have bloomed this month. They make a nice little hanging display in my grow

area. Also, in bloom this month are my outdoor Sobrailias and Coelgyne. My Sobrailia bush has 7 flowers that bloom repeatedly on the same cane and form beautiful large fragrant flowers.

This month marked the first in-person FCOS meeting since 2020. The gathering took place in the backyard of Denise and Hoss Florez. We all had the opportunity to socialize, share a potluck, and engage in a silent orchid auction. It was an amazing and successful event. We'd like to thank all the people that worked so hard to make this happen: Denise and Hoss Florez for offering their home and organizing the event, Chris Ehler for arranging for Costco to supply our tri-tip and chicken (thanks Costco!), Michelle Ralston and Eric Holenda for their organizational skills and labor, members of the Board for their support with the auction, as well as attendees and contributors to the potluck. We also have many thanks to those who contributed orchids for the Auction. We had so many! Thanks to the CalPoly Plant shop for their donation of 90 large Cymbidiums. Thanks to CalCoast Orchids for their donation of 2 dozen flowering Phaleanopsis orchids. Thanks to Ed Lysek for his donation of 30 plants. Thanks to Rlarry Touchette for his donation of Bletilla bulbs. Thanks to SLO Orchids for their donation of NOID orchids. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Anne Bachman who has cared for the variety of orchid seedlings that FCOS has purchased over the years. Many of these orchids are now blooming size and will be looking for new homes. My wife, Rebecca, and I repotted my large Arpophyllum and offered several divisions in the auction. Thanks also to the many other members who donated plants for the auction as well. It turned out to be a beautiful day.

Looking forward, we have our upcoming Zoom Meeting scheduled for August 11th, 7:00-8:30 pm. Our speaker will be Brandon Tam, Director of the Orchid Collection at the Huntington Botanical Garden (HBG). He will be discussing the Paphiopedilums and Phragmedpediums that are grown at the HBG. Brandon is extremely knowledgeable and an engaging speaker, and we are all looking forward to his presentation.

Our next in-person event will be held on Sept 10 at the Cal Poly greenhouse and Leaning Pine Arboretum, behind the Cal Poly Plant Shop. <https://aepe.calpoly.edu/leaning-pine-arboretum> At that time, we will hold an orchid plant exchange with the Cal Poly greenhouse. The Cal Poly orchid collection includes hundreds of Cymbidiums at this time. Cal Poly is interested in expanding their diversity of species and hybrids, for teaching purposes and to inspire their students. To participate, bring one orchid to exchange for 2 plants from the Cal Poly collection of orchids and succulents. Note: please bring only healthy plants, and no Cymbidiums, please! We will release more information on this event soon.

In September we have a special talk on Encyclias of Mexico and Beyond by Tim Culbertson. Be sure to keep checking the events section on our website for information on upcoming Orchid Talks and events. <https://www.fcoss.org/events-and-where>

I would like to encourage you to support the FCOS by paying your annual dues, if you haven't done so already this year. We are also grateful for any donation you can contribute. These funds help us grow our programs and bring you engaging and knowledgeable speakers. FCOS is

a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

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Happy Blooming!

Jeff



Sobralia (vapaebasis 'Q' X Nin Roe 'Pol') -first time blooming. I've had this growing in my backyard in Los Osos for 3 years and recently moved it from full sun to shade and was rewarded me with this huge bloom. Grown by Jeff Parham



Plants left to right are SVO 8077 Lc Tiny Treasure 'Star Amethyst' HCC x SLC Lana Cornell Forevermore'. Lc Hina Murasakino (fragrant mini coerulea) and SLC Angel Eyes SVO' HCC/AOS x SLC Segulls Apricot Majestic. Bloomed under LED lights from the Orchid Hobbyist <http://BotanicalLEDs.com>.



Sobralia (Mirabilis 'Summer White' x Leucoxantha 'T') has 6 canes blooming with sequential blooms. These are the second batch of flowers this month. Plant was grown under almost full sun until this month when it was moved under a birch tree with more dappled light. Grown by Jeff Parham.



Five Cities Orchid Society Presents:

**Paphiopedilums and Phragmepediums at the Huntington
Botanical Gardens**

by Brandon Tam

Thursday August 11th, 2022 7:00 - 8:30 PM PST

Join [Zoom](#) Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82355435739?pwd=bThHazRPekw5cjhnYmNzMlpkTW96dz09>

Meeting ID: 823 5543 5739

Passcode: 204435

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcNqzKNn34>

**The FCOS July 17th Pot Luck/Orchid Auction/In-Person Get Together was a
GREAT SUCCESS**



Our July 17th get together was a huge success!....190 orchid donated and over 60 members and friends attended. Many thanks to Denise and Hoss Florez for hosting this event and the many members who helped set up the tables, brought food and made sure everyone had a great time. Kim and RLarry joined Karen and Denise for some great food and lively conversation.



Bob and Betsy relaxing on the patio

Jan and Ian brought some amazing orchids for the auction.





Eric did a great job making sure there were enough chairs and tables and was instrumental in working with Chris and Denise to make this event successful.

Chris never had a doubt he and Eric would be successful. On the other hand, Paloma is waiting for Chris to drop something from his tray.





Alan found a few orchids to his liking and went home with several new additions to his collection.

Jeff was busy answering growing questions all day long.





Hilding had a great time and went home with a few new orchids.

Christina had the best idea....sit back, relax and watch everyone having a great time.



What's Blooming Now - a few photos from our members and friends



Cattleya Brabantiae 'El Toro' growing in a hanging plastic net basket. Long lasting flowers on a compact plant. Grown by Ed Lysek.



Rhynchostylus retusa growing in a slotted clay pot without any media in the pot. Watered daily and the clay pot helps to keep the root zone humid. Grown by Ed Lysek.



A close up of the flowers of *R. retusa*.

Stanhopea oculata had two bloom spikes with a total of six flowers. Like all Stanhopeas, the flowers grow down, through the media and must be grown in hanging wire baskets. This species has the amazing scent of mint chocolate chip ice cream. Grown by Ed Lysek.





Cymbidium Geoff Laird. A pendulous cymbidium. Spike had 24 flowers. Plant was a gift from Ed Lysek. Grown outside by Chris Ehler.

Laeliocattleya interceps (aquini coerulea). A primary hybrid between *Cattleya intermedia* and *Laelia anceps*. Grown mounted on a piece of wood with a small amount of sphagnum moss on the roots. Grown near the ceiling in a cool greenhouse. Grown Chris Ehler.





Closeup of the lip of the
Laeliocattleya interceps.

Lycaste aromatica. Has a great fragrance. A cool to warm growing epiphyte or terrestrial found at 500 to 2,000 meters found from in Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador. Grown outside in a plastic pot filled with a mixture of bark and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Masdevallia Golden Bells. Grown in a cool greenhouse in a clay pot filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Masdevallia Golden Monarch. Grown outside in a plastic pot filled with a mixture of bark and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.



Closeup of *Masdevallia* Golden Monarch flower.

Masdevallia Ruby Slippers. Grown in a cool greenhouse in a clay pot filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Myoxanthus serripetalis
'Chris' AM/AOS. Found in Peru and Ecuador on the eastern slopes of the Andes at elevation of 1,000 to 3,100 meters growing as either a terrestrial or epiphyte. Grown in a cool greenhouse and also outside in a clay pot filled with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Stanhopea oculata. This orchid grown by Chris Ehrler had two spikes with three flowers on one spike and four on the other. See closeup of an individual flower in a plant grown by Ed Lysek.





Dracula ophiiceps. A cool growing epiphyte found at about 1600 meter elevation in the central cordillera in southwester Colombia. This orchid is growing in a cool greenhouse mounted onto a piece of cork oak with some sphagnum moss on the root. Grown by Chris Ehrlar.

Side view of *Dracula ophiiceps*.







August: The Month of Ambrosia

By Thomas Mirenda

Reprinted from *Orchids: The Bulletin of the American Orchid Society* August 2008. Vol. 77. Number 8.

Among the purest and most primal joys of the plant world are the wonderful perfumes and aromas emanating from your orchid collection and your garden this month. August is not a month to toil, but rather one to savor the wonders of creation, for how often have you really looked at your orchid flowers? Sure, they are colorful and beautiful, but they are so much more. They are part of the continuity of life, an end-product of evolution, a lure, irresistible to pollinators — and humans.

Ambrosia, in Greek mythology, was the food of the gods and was thought to confer ageless immortality to those who consumed it. In Homeric tradition, it was perceived to be a kind of divine exhalation of the earth. Nectar, the drink of the gods, comes from the contraction of two Greek words — *nek* (death) and *tar* (overcoming) — indicating its healing and life-giving properties.

This month, we must appreciate what comes from the earth. It is now, in our gardens' summer peak, that we, bathed in early morning light or encroaching twilight, emerge from our chambers to sample the fruit and fragrances wrought by our toils earlier in the spring. It is most important to take in that sweet ambrosia offered daily by the plant world. While it's unlikely that those who do will achieve immortality, the peace and pleasure to be gained are timeless.

FRAGRANCES - Among the most amazing aromatic flowers in the plant world are the blossoms of Stanhopeas and their allies. Often smelling like an exotic mixture of several different fragrances, most of these plants have sharply pendulous inflorescences and should be grown in

hanging baskets. If you have young seedlings or divisions of Stanhopeas or their relatives, such as Embreeas, Gongoras, Acinetas, or Coryanthes, in regular pots, lift the plants from their pots to check and make sure they have not sent out inflorescences into the mix. Often these inflorescences, unable to escape the confines of the pot, end up rotting. It is possible for many Stanhopeas and their relatives to bloom at an earlier age than you might think, and a gentle transfer of young plants into baskets might be in order before their spikes develop too much.

UNINVITED GUESTS - The summer heat generally means stepped-up insect activity. There are both good and bad insects in the garden, and if you have chosen to summer plants outside, you have some of each among your plants. Be on the lookout for parasites such as mealybugs and scale. And be prepared to spray insecticides if you are finding large infestations. If, however, after a thorough search you find minimal problems, your beneficial insects, such as ladybugs and other small predators, are likely to keep plants free of problems. Spraying at this point would only damage beneficial populations.

ANTS - One of the worst pests in August is ants. Their colonies will often invade the coarse, airy conditions of orchid media and will greatly acidify the mix. Observe plants after a heavy watering, and, if an ant colony is present, it will be obvious by the ants streaming out of the saturated mix. It is not fun, but such plants must be purged of ants and repotted immediately. Ants are vectors for many other insects and cannot be tolerated.

ANT PLANTS - While I have never tried this, and do not dare recommend it, there are certain plants that, in the wild anyway, seem to benefit from the presence of ants. In particular, *Myrmecophila* (which means "ant I lover" in Latin) has symbiotic relationships with ants that act as the plants' bodyguards during the dry season. The plants supply space and nectar in their hollow pseudobulbs where the ants can nest. Seeds of these and other orchids, such as *Coryanthes*, often germinate on or near ant nests and seem to require or feed off of the extreme acidity that comes from the formic acid excreted by the ants. It is conceivable that such plants might actually thrive better if ants were allowed to invade them for the summer. Still, you do want to do something about that before bringing the plants inside for the winter.

COOL IT - In a mixed collection, there will always be some plants that are experiencing stress in the oppressive heat so characteristic of August. Among the strategies for cooling plants are shade, gentle airflow, and frequent cool mistings. It is your degree of engagement during those stiflingly hot days that will help your struggling orchids get through the worst of the season.

HOT STUFF - While most of the intermediate orchids struggle, many warmer-growing orchids take the heat in stride. Fertilize them well and allow them the chance to prosper in the summer heat. Pay attention to your *Dendrobiums*, *Vandas*, *Catasetums*, *Brassavolas*, and *Encyclias*, all of which use August for increasing their pseudobulbs.

- Tom Miranda has been working professionally with orchids for over three decades. He is currently an AOS trustee and is a past chair of the AOS Conservation Committee. He is an AOS accredited judge in the Hawaii Center (email: biophiliak@gmail.com)



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When	August Summer Break	Sept. 13, 2022 8:30pm EDT Tuesday	Sept. 19, 2022 8:30pm EDT Monday
Topic	Choose Your Topic From RECORDED WEBINARS	Greenhouse Chat Orchid Q & A <i>Send in your Questions!</i>	<i>Paphiopedilum venustum</i> The Pauper Prince of the Himalayas
Presenter	Expert Growers, AOS Judges, Hobbyists, Conservationists and more	Ron McHatton Chief Education and Science Officer	Dr. Leslie Ee Accredited AOS Judge, President COC

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- Monthly Zoom talks from local and worldwide Orchid Experts.
- Opportunities to win beautiful and quality orchids.
- Network with amateur, advanced collectors and commercial growers
- Select invitation to our Holiday Party/Summer Picnic and Auctions.
- Participation in our Annual Central California Coast Orchid Show
- Create orchid displays for The Huntington Botanical Gardens International Orchid Show/The Santa Barbara International Orchid Show.
- Invitation to exclusive FCOS Field-trips to out of town vendors and events.
- **Click to download a copy of the [FCOS Membership Form.](#)**
- Membership dues are \$25 per year for an individual or family. \$15 after June 1 for the balance of the calendar year.
- **Make your check payable to Five Cities Orchid Society, PO Box 1066 Grover Beach, CA 93483.**
- **Please include your completed membership form with your payment.**
- Thank You for becoming a member of the Five Cities Orchid Society.

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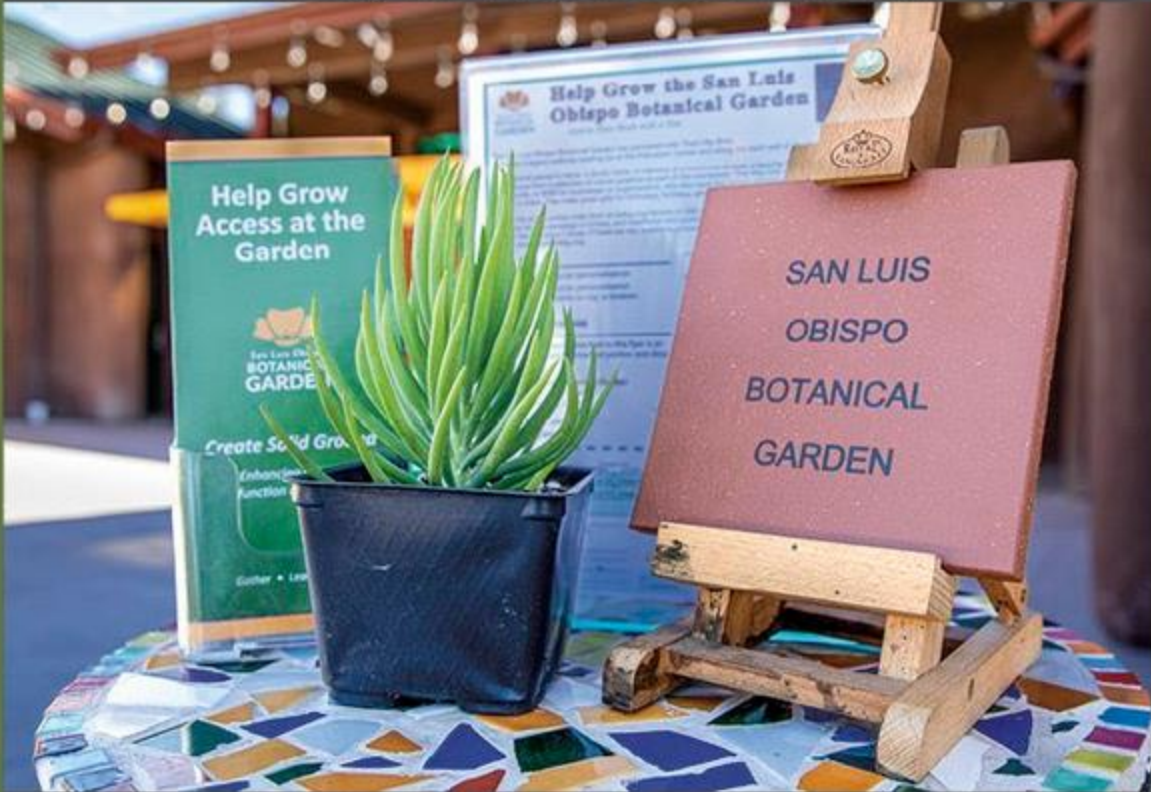
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FCOS Garage Sale

Send an email to [Jeff Parham](#), [Chris Ehrler](#) or [Ed Lysek](#) and include an image of your item, a description, price, and your contact info. We'll include your info in our next monthly newsletter if there is space. FCOS assumes no responsibility for payment, taxes, etc. We ask the items be orchid or plant related. FCOS is not taking a commission or participating in any other way.

Orchid Virus tests from Agi labs. \$8 each, contact Jeff at jsp1440@aol.com

Cymbidiums for Sale in San Luis Obispo. 5-gallon pots of mature plants, many in spike. Seeking for \$20-\$30 each. See photos below. Contact Jerry Camel 805-543-9338.

Cymbidium Divisions \$6 each, contact Denise @ fcos.org@gmail.com

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