



November 2021 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.fcos.org



RLC Yen Corona "Green Genie"™ - first bloom from one of the seedlings available in the next auction.



Brassia antiaea -first time flowering seedling from Ecuagenera. Growing in bark in my backyard in Los Osos, CA.



Epidendrum Pacific Senorita â€™ Summer Funâ€™ x Pacific Sparkler â€™orange & redâ€™-growing in partial shade in my backyard in Los Osos. This is one of the large flowered Epidendrums from CalOrchids. FCOS will have several non-flowering size (NFS) seedlings of large flowered epidendrums in the upcoming auction hybridized by Carmella Orchids. These are expected to be cool tolerant and grow well outside.

From the Presidents' Potting Bench

I hope that all of you are keeping healthy and in good spirits.

This past October was really an exciting time. Gary Meyer gave an amazing talk on *Dracula* orchids and the influence of Greek mythology in the naming of orchids in this group. If you missed this talk you will surely want to watch the recording and read the synopsis below. Additionally, we were invited by the Conejo Orchid Society to participate in their meeting this month which featured Scott McGregor and his presentation on orchids that he grows outside here in Southern California. Since I am also trying to populate my yard with orchids, I was particularly interested in his presentation. Many orchids will grow outside in a Mediterranean Climate and now I

have an exciting new wish list of outdoor plants. FCOS has booked Scott McGregor to be one of our speakers next year.

It's hard to believe that November is here and 2021 is rapidly coming to an end. I've been busy in my little grow areas and enjoying the few orchids in bloom, especially with the fall colors. I have been waiting patiently for some lady slipper orchids to open these blooms, any day now. Some of my Phaleanopsis and Cymbidiums are beginning to spike and I will track their progress and stake the flowers once they are about 3-5 inches long.

FCOS is planning to hold another orchid auction before the end of the year, on November 9-13th. We will send out details prior to the auction start date. If you would like to donate any items, please use this link: <https://fcos.betterworld.org/donate-an-item>

The FCOS is preparing to go into the future and we are looking for some volunteers. Elections of officers are scheduled for our December meeting. If you are interested in serving as a member of our Board Of Directors, please notify Karen at kkolba@aol.com.

We have joined both the San Luis and the South County Chambers of Commerce and several of us have attended some chamber functions and mixers. Chamber functions are open to any member of the FCOS so if you are interested, please let me know and I can put you on the chamber list as an official representative of the FCOS. It's a great opportunity to network with your community and represent the FCOS.

Have you checked out our website lately? We have archived our past newsletters, speakers notes, videos and pictures on our website. Please visit www.fcos.org and sign up to receive the newsletters. It will help us build our subscriber list that already numbers over 250. If you have any feedback on the website, please let me know. We are also looking for members to write articles for our website and newsletter. If you have any orchid related stories, cultural information that you would like to share, book reviews, trips, orchid sales, photos etc, please send it to me to be considered for publication. We are also represented on Facebook, please stop by and post pictures of your flowering orchids. Be sure to send any photos for 'Show and Tell' or 'What's wrong with this Orchid?' by November 11. After our speaker we will devote the rest of the meeting to sharing pictures of our orchids and addressing anyone's questions on orchid culture.

We are actively looking at building partnerships within the community and we encourage our members to join Zoom events from other societies and invite members of other orchid societies to join us for our monthly meetings and planned orchid talks. We have had some excellent speakers and topics lined up through the end of this year and have already begun to book speakers for next year. Be sure to keep up to date on the events section of our website for the latest information:

<https://www.fcos.org/events-and-where>

I would like to encourage you to support the FCOS by becoming a member and paying your dues. If possible, you can also send in a donation -- the FCOS is a 501(C)3 non-profit and donations are tax-deductible. Your contributions assist us in growing our programs and scheduling speakers for our meetings. If you are just visiting but would like to support our efforts you can send in a donation to <https://fcos.betterworld.org/donate#form>

Happy Blooming!
Jeffery



It finally bloomed! Papiopedilum Bright Angel "Dreamer"™. Grown by Jeff Parham



Five Cities Orchid Society Presents:

Marni Turkel

'Less is More: Small Orchids'

Thursday, November 11th at 7 pm

A look at the joys, benefits, possibilities, and challenges of miniature orchids. The talk covers some basics such as "What makes an orchid an orchid," growing spaces both indoors and out, a review of cultural needs of orchids in general and small orchids in particular. It also includes a gallery of wonderful species that are space saving and extremely rewarding. An excellent talk for beginning as well as experience growers.

Marni Turkel (pronounced tur KELL) is a native of the San Francisco Bay Area and has been growing orchids since 1980. She grows in four greenhouses in Santa Rosa with approximately 1250 sq ft of growing space. Her main interest is in miniature species but plenty of larger plants have crept into the collection as well. Marni has been a contributor to Orchids magazine with her series called 'Well Worth the Space' and 'Give It a Rest'. Her articles have been translated into Dutch, German, Portuguese and Swedish for international publication. Photographs of her plants have been featured in articles noted orchid publications including Orchids Magazine, Orchid Digest, Richardiana, The Orchid Review, and The Australian Orchid Review. For the last few years she has been sharing her photographs and knowledge on [OrchidsForum.com](https://www.orchidsforum.com).

Starting in 2009, Marni expanded her work with orchids to include propagation of orchids from seed and has set up a flasking lab of her own to take the process from start to finish and sell flasks of many of the orchid species in her collection. After working for over 43 years as a potter, she has retired from ceramics to pursue orchids full-time. If you would like to purchase any of Marni's flasks, please go to her website at <http://marniturkel.com/mostlyspecies.html>

The Five Cities Orchid Society (FCOS) is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: FCOS's Orchid Talks

Date/Time: November 11, 2021 at 7 pm

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/j/kcNqzKNn34>

Last month's meeting featured a presentation by Gary Meyers with a Halloween theme!..



What would be better for a society's October meeting than a presentation about Dracula (the orchid genus that is). FCOS was pleased to have Dr. Gary Meyer give his presentation entitled "Gods and Monsters - The Mythology of Dracula" at our October meeting. Gary has been growing Dracula orchids in his parents' basement in Michigan since 1990. He moved to San Francisco in 1992 and began DNA studies on Dracula in 2006. Gary is the owner of Colombian Orchid Imports (<https://www.colombianorchidimports.com/>) which imports Colombian orchids from one of South America's premiere orchid collections. He generally orders twice per year and if you are interested in more information or to answer any questions about ordering, plants, etc. please contact him via his email gary@colombianorchidimports.com. Gary's entertaining talk began by discussing how Carl Luer wanted to name the genus "Little Dragons" which would have been *Dracuncula* but this genus was already used for another group so thus the name *Dracula* was used for this genus. Gary then went on to discuss how the different *Dracula* species were based on mythology and he divided into his categories of "Gods and Monsters", "Bats and Vampires" and "Other Spooks". He also mentioned that in some folks refer to this genus as "Monkey Orchids" due mainly to the appearance of the flower (see *D. Simia* below) but only two species are named after monkeys so he stated we should not be referring to *Dracula* orchids as monkey orchids.

He suggested that as a group *Dracula* grow better if the humidity is at least 70%. He also suggested if your growing area has intermediate to warm conditions that you might consider growing some of the following *Dracula* species: *D. lotax*, *D. mopsus*, *D. vespertilio*, *D. cordobae*, or *D. woolwardiae*.



In summary ...

- 1 • Don't call Draculas <monkey orchids>.
- 2 • Don't.
- 3 • I'm serious.



www.fppt.info

In case you missed it, Gary Meyer emphatically stated, calling Dracula orchids “monkey orchids” contributes to their destruction in the wild by poachers trying to supply novelty plants to inexperienced growers. Seriously - DON'T DO IT!

Topic: [Gods and Monsters](#)

Meeting Recording:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/8nv2qX4kYo95T3cLpWdZTTteNvw3-Oj5EZ7JR13T17IVyrK0hIWYvmmM2BtsRWEi.nbwXx3IzjGjQid09>

Access Passcode: L%0Xv+hF

Simia



November: The Month of Maturity

by Thomas Mirenda

When orchids grow into mature specimens, they can be mind-blowingly beautiful. One of the great joys of cultivating orchids is watching them progress and attain dimensions and flowerings seldom witnessed in the wild. Coddled and pampered in our greenhouses and orchid gardens, with the benefit of excellent fertilizers, superior media and our well-informed growing prowess, orchids can perform miraculous feats. The AOS rewards such plants with cultural awards such as the Certificate of Cultural Merit or Certificate of Cultural Excellence.

While human beings are obsessed with youthful good looks and we tend not to win any beauty contests as we age, I like to think we become more beautiful in other ways. If we cultivate ourselves and develop our intelligence, culture and wisdom through experience, travel and socialization, we develop into something truly beautiful – creatures that can make the world a better place for those we care about.

While my expanding midsection and philosopher's furrows in my brow may not win me any beauty contests, I've found that when I strive to do good works, am kind to myself and others, learn as much as I can each day and share that knowledge, however incomplete, I might still be worthy of a cultural award one day.

SLOW THE SPIGOT Along with days being shorter with the winter solstice approaching, temperatures are cooler, skies are grayer and the nights are longer. Most orchids (except Southern Hemisphere terrestrials, such as *Pterostylis* or *Disa*) are requiring far less water than they did in spring and summer. *Cattleyas* should now have mature growths with sheaths, and *Cymbidiums* should show large fat pseudobulbs and the cone-shaped beginnings of inflorescences, while *Phalaenopsis* should be elongating the spikes they initiated last month. Water and humidity are still necessary for these orchids to progress toward flowering, but less is definitely more this month. Certain orchids from seasonally dry habitats, such as *Dendrobiums*, *Habenarias* and *Catasetums*, should be left extremely dry starting now, to the point where the plants drop some leaves. This, though disconcerting, is part of their culture and often necessary for blooming. It should be noted here that many of the pseudobulbous species orchids from Mexico and Central America (*Lycaste*, *Encyclia* and many others) are experiencing the beginning of their dry season now and should be watered and fertilized accordingly for the next few months.

PESTER THE PESTS If your plants summered in the yard, by now any pests that may have come inside with your orchids for the winter will have made themselves known. Make sure to treat any infestations promptly. Most outside insects do not fare well in the greenhouse, and can be eradicated with ease, but it is the sucking parasites that one must start watching for. Without the benefit of rain and beneficial insects, mite populations often explode, particularly on soft leaved orchids such as *Lycastes* or *Phaius*. If undetected, these can do significant damage. Look for small webbing on the undersides of leaves and a 'silvering' effect on the upper surface. This is due to the dying of cells from the sucking arachnids. Mites are inhibited by high humidity and can be controlled (in a small collection) by regularly wiping the undersides of the leaves with a wet sponge or rag with insecticidal soap. Larger collections need spraying with a miticide.

WHAT'S AT STAKE With many orchids, particularly *Phalaenopsis* and *Cymbidiums*, sending out spikes, it is advantageous to start guiding the inflorescences with stakes. Even if the spike is too

short to tie at this juncture, setting a stake in the pot near the newly emergent inflorescence is a good reminder that a spike is coming and the plant should be treated with the utmost delicacy. Longer spikes can be tied and guided upward to avoid crossing and tangling with other inflorescences. Once inside, many orchids begin to slough off old leaves and growths from previous years, no longer needed by the plant in the diminishing light. Such leaves and tissues should be removed to avoid rotting in winter.

TEMPERATURES Cooler-growing plants (Masdevallias, Draculas and cooler growing Oncidiums) are thriving now. Take advantage of the natural drop in temperatures to encourage new growth and blooming in these sensitive species. Any hardy orchids such as Bletillas, Cypripediums and Cremastras that you may have planted outside will benefit greatly from an insulating mulch of pine needles spread deep enough to hold some heat yet fine enough to allow sprouts to develop in the early spring. In the greenhouse, search out any broken windows or other sources of drafts that can really hurt your orchids in midwinter. A little attention to this now will prevent heartache in December when the damage has been done.

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

[ORCHIDS Magazine \(www.aos.org\)](http://www.aos.org)

<https://www.aos.org/about-us/orchids-magazine.aspx>

Webinars-Coming Attractions!



When	November 09, 2021 8:30pm EST Tuesday	November 17, 2021 8:30pm EST Wednesday	WEBINARS ON DEMAND Watch Recorded Webinars Any Time
Topic	Orchid Collection Tour The Huntington Botanical Gardens	Greenhouse Chat (Orchid Q&A) <i>Send in your Questions!</i>	Species and Hybrids, Pests and Diseases, Culture, Judging, Greenhouse Chats
Presenter	Brandon Tam Orchid Collection Specialist, AOS Judge	Ron McHatton Chief Education and Science Officer	www.aos.org/orchids/webinars

REGISTRATION REQUIRED: <http://www.aos.org/orchids/webinars.aspx>

Cannot make it on the scheduled date or time? No need to worry. Register anyhow! Webinars are recorded and available to view at your leisure.

GREENHOUSE CHAT Webinars are indexed by topic for future viewing.

Send your Greenhouse Chat questions and photos to: greenhousechat@aos.org.

Some of the webinars are for AOS members only, so this is another good reason to become an AOS member.



If you are looking for interesting articles filled with mystery and intrigue, go to the excellent website <https://www.exoticaesoterica.com/>. *Phragmipedium kovachii* is a stunning orchid, as seen in the above photo taken at Dan Newman's Hanging Gardens greenhouse on Sept 21, 2019. An article about this species is fascinating and illustrated with photos by Ron Parsons and the Esoterica Exotica authors. While you are at it, take a look at the many fascinating articles on a range of orchids, botanical oddities and even a few articles on marine reef fish. And yes, I've asked the website author if he would like to be a speaker for our society meetings, but unfortunately he is not a fan of either Zoom or public speaking in general. Ed L.



Two months ago, Ray Barkalow of [First Rays](#) spoke about the benefits of kelp extracts in promoting better root growth. I've sprayed my *C. perciviliana* with KelpMax (recently renamed Kelpak) two months in a row. Not sure if this burst a new root activity is due to KelpMax, but it sure seems like it. -Ed L.

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



Sophrolaelia Orpetti is a small sized orchid that forms multiple leads creating a specimen plant covered with flowers in late Autumn. Growing in a slatted basket with minimal bark. Grown by Ed Lysek.

Cattleya maxima - coerulea form. Just keeps opening more and more blooms. Grown in a plastic net basket with large chunks of native live oak bark. Plant obtained two years ago from Air Plant Alchemy in Carpinteria. Grown by Ed Lysek.





Cattleya bowringiana reliably blooms this time of year. This plant will be up for auction at the next BetterWorld/FCOS auction. Plant obtained from India 4 years ago and this is the first time it has bloomed. Grown by Ed Lysek.

Cataseum Brazilian Spring
"Kestral"™ has pendulous flowers
on a long spike. Original plant from Eric
Holenda, now happily growing in Ed
Lysek's™ greenhouse.





Cattleya fimbriatum X *C. osculatum*.
The fimbriatum parent gives this flower its fringed lip and is also responsible for the fringed lip on “Kestral” above. The osculatum parent contributes increased flower size and a somewhat flatter lip. Grown by Eric Holanda.

Clowesia Rebecca Northen X
Catasetum cirraeoides. Grown by Eric
Holenda.



Encyclia "Jungle Gem"™ has been
in bloom for months. Grown by Eric
Holenda.

Cymbidium Enzan Forest. It's
flowering exactly when it should -
Halloween. Grown by Joan Graham.





Epidendrium porpax. Found in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Brazil in wet montane and cloud forests at elevations of 400 to 1800 meters as a mini-miniature sized, hot to cool growing, mat-forming epiphyte. This plant is growing in cool greenhouse mounted to a piece of cedar with sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrlie.

Epidendrium porpax flower.





Coelogyne tormentosa. A cool to cold growing epiphyte found natively in Malaysia, Sumatra, Borneo, and Java in river valleys at elevations of 1150 to 2100 meters and in montane forests on higher ridges. This orchid is grown in a cool greenhouse in semi-hydroponic conditions in a plastic container. This spike had 21 flowers/buds while the other spike that is still growing has 17 buds. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Coelogyne tormentosa flower.





Dendrobium (Tosca x Rutherford Starburst) 'Red Wine' x *Den.* Hilda Poxon 'SVO Spectacular' from Sunset Valley Orchids. Is growing outside on the north side of the house which gets light but no direct sun. Grown in a plastic container filled with a combination of Orchiate and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Dendrobium Aussie Parade 'Carrot Splash' x *Den. Allyn Star Crikey*' AM-AOS from Sunset Valley Orchids. Is growing outside on the north side of the house which gets light but no direct sun. Grown in a plastic container filled with a combination of Orchiata and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Masdevallia species (floribunda-type pink). *Masdevallia floribunda* is found in Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras and Costa Rica in damp forests at elevations of 400 to 1500 meters as a hot to cool growing, epiphytic species. Grown mounted on a piece of wood with small amount of sphagnum moss. Grown by Jeffrey Thompson.

Flowers of *Masdevallia* species
(floribunda-type pink).





Pleurothallis allenii. A warm to cool growing epiphyte found in central Panama at elevations of 550 to 1000 meters. Grown mounted on a piece of wood with small amount of sphagnum moss. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Pleurothallis bothos. Natively found in Costa Rica at elevations around 750 to 2400 meters growing as a warm to cold growing epiphyte. Grown in a cool greenhouse in a sphagnum moss filled clay pot. Grown by Chris Ehrler.





Pleurothallis lindenii. Is found in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru in wet, cold, cloud forests at elevations of 2600 to 3350 meters as a small to large sized, cold growing epiphyte or terrestrial. Although many orchids in this genus are small this particular orchid is 16 inches above the top of the pot. Grown outside in a clay pot filled with a combination of Orchiatea and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Flowers of *Pleurothallis lindenii*.





Pleurothallis species. Although this orchid has a name on the tag it does not appear to match the photos of the named species in www.orchidspecies.com. Grown inside a cool greenhouse in sphagnum moss placed in a clay pot. Grown by Chris Ehrler.

Stanhopea stevensonii. A cool growing epiphyte growing in Colombia. Growing in a cool greenhouse in a wood slat basket lined with sphagnum moss and filled with Orchiata bark and lava rock. Grown by Chris Ehrler.



Flower of *Stanhopea stevensonii*.

Seed pods growing on a *Stanhopea tigrina*. One pods is a selfing and the other is made with pollen from *Stanhopea hernandezii*. It is estimated that it will take 8-10 months for seed development.





Alan Durham lost the tag on this bifoliate Cattleya some time ago, but it sure likes his growing conditions.

Last month Eric Holenda promised to send a "selfie" with one of his orchids. Looks like the Cataseum orchid photobombed the photo. Thanks Eric!



FCOS Lifetime Membership

A New FCOS Lifetime Membership is available for a donation of \$500. The FCOS Board is looking for creative ways to ensure the long-term financial health of FCOS. For those of you who are able to consider this generous donation your lifetime membership will help FCOS maintain its quality speaker programs and prepare for the resumption of our Spring Show. [Click here for donation details.](#)

Become a Life Member of FCOS for a \$500 donation!

2022 MEMBERSHIP DUES

YOUR \$25 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2022 ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED AND ALLOW US TO SECURE WORLD CLASS SPEAKERS FOR OUR MONTHLY ZOOM MEETINGS. LOOK FOR THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS FOR DETAILS.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Here's a better way to air your dirty (or clean) laundry. Got a complaint, suggestion or just want to express your opinion, send an email to our editors, [Jeff Parham](#), [Chris Ehrler](#) or [Ed Lysek](#). (photo courtesy of Gary Yong Gee).

Question: Joan Graham asks, where can I obtain Spanish Moss to hang on my slatted baskets of Vanda orchids to help increase the humidity around the exposed roots?

Answer: Watch for the next FCOS/BetterWorld auction and handful strands of Spanish Moss will be available at no charge at the pick-up location. Spanish Moss, actually a member of the Bromeliad family (*Tillandsia usneoides*) is native to the U.S. Southeast as far north as Virginia.

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.

Five Cities Orchid Society 2021 Board of Directors

Jeff Parham, *President* jsp1440@aol.com

Ed Lysek, *Vice President* edlysek@me.com

Alan Durham, *Treasurer* a.durham@sbcglobal.net

Julie Orr, *Secretary*

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Orchids are really great!

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