



East Texas Orchid Society

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ETOS - Making a Name for Itself.

It's *almost* official! We had another great meeting in April and we are really coming together as a group. It is becoming clear that we do have the level of commitment and common focus necessary to grow as an orchid society. We've created a comfortable and casual environment that fosters new friendships and promotes learning. This is a strong foundation upon which ETOS can build itself as a successful, long-lived, independent entity – driven by its membership.

At the last meeting we also took the first steps toward functioning independently by proposing bylaws, nominating officers, and establishing annual dues. We will be voting on our first slate of officers on May 3rd but we are still accepting any nominations or volunteers. The hard part is behind us, folks. With all of the technicalities out of the way, we can focus on much more important matters – orchids! ~

2009 Officer Nominees

President – Olie Garrison **Vice President** – Cindy McReynolds **Secretary** – Justin Daniel **Treasurer** – Wynn Logan

Speaking of Names...

To some growers, plant tags contain only scientific mumbo-jumbo, confusing and pointless for their purposes. This is fine for those buying orchids as disposable centerpieces, only to be discarded once the blooms fade. But for the rest of us, plant tags contain useful information about a plant's care, natural habitat or parentage in the case of hybrids, variety or cultivar, and any awards given to a specific clone. We actually want to be able to answer when someone asks, "What kind of orchid is that?" As a collection builds, names become more important, distinguishing plants that might look similar when not in bloom. Similarly, as your level of experience increases your interests may progress to a point where names are crucial. If you ever aspire to enter a plant to be judged, trade or sell a division, or even dabble in hybridizing, names will be of the utmost importance. Even if you don't care what the name is, I hope I'm convincing you to hold on to your plant tags. Now let's try to learn how to make some sense out of them.

The first name listed is the genus (plural - genera). The genus name is always capitalized and indicates that a plant falls into a certain group sharing similar growth habits or other certain characteristics. Since orchids can hybridize across genus lines, this name may be a combination of two or more genera or an artificial genus (when combining genus names is impractical). The second name is either the species or hybrid name. Species are always written in lower case, underlined if written and italicized if in type. Often the species name describes certain characteristics of the plant or flower.

Hybrids are given a grex or hybrid name that identifies it as the offspring of certain parents. Grex names are always capitalized. Grex names can sound silly or be in memory of a loved one. Sometimes a grex can give you a clue as to the parents, combining the specific epithets of both. For example: *Cattleya Interglossa* = *C. intermedia* x *C. amethystoglossa*. The Royal Horticultural Society in Kew, England maintains the hybrid orchid registration system and a searchable database linked on the ETOS website.

Some orchids have clonal name that distinguishes them as unique. If we were to hybridize two plants the results would vary, just as children from the same parents may look similar in ways but each still have their own unique features. This clonal name is capitalized and placed inside single quotes, and is sometimes followed by award(s) that particular clone has received. Plants with the same clonal name are genetically identical to each other, produced by divisions or meristem propagation. Are you with me so far? Here are a few examples to help all this info sink in:

- *Brassavola* Little Stars – we know this is a hybrid because the second name is capitalized. Parents are *B. nodosa* x *B. cordata*.
- *Brassocattleya* Maikai 'Mayumi' – this hybrid is the result of crossing *Brassavola nodosa* x *Cattleya bowringiana*. 'Mayumi' is an offspring of this cross, selected for its color and shape and awarded based on standards for the cross at that time. This clone has been mass-produced and is readily available. We can be assured that any Bc. Maikai 'Mayumi' is identical to the original awarded plant.
- *Encyclia tampensis* var. *alba* 'Mendenhall' – This is the albino form of a species found growing wild in the Tampa, FL region. The 'Mendenhall' clone is a superior clone with true, non-fading green petals and sepals and a pure white lip.
- *Cattleya loddigesii* 'Blue Sky' AM/AOS – The clonal name for this *Cattleya* species gives us a hint of its main desirable attribute: a sky blue coloration. This clone has received the AOS Award of Merit due to its high quality. Again, every 'Blue Sky' clone will be identical.
- *Cattleya loddigesii* 'Blue Sky' x self – This is the offspring of self-pollinating the 'Blue Sky' clone. As with any progeny, these seedlings will show some variation, but good genes beget good offspring. Using awarded clones in breeding increases the chances of yielding quality results. We could expect these seedlings to have large, flat flowers with good presentation with the likelihood of blue coloration.

April 22-26, AOS Spring Show, Hosted by Houston Orchid Society – This will be one BIG show. Here's your chance to see thousands and thousands of orchids in full bloom, all under one roof (and practically in our backyard). Vendors from all over the world will have plants for sale so bring your camera and a little extra spending money.

May 5, Sunday: ETOS May meeting – 1:30 pm at Unity Church, South St., Nacogdoches, TX

May Meeting Preview: Join us at 1:30 on Sunday May 3rd for our next meeting. We will be voting for officers and on the approval of our bylaws. Membership applications will be available and we will begin to collect annual dues (\$20 for an individual, \$30 for two members at the same residence).

To contact ETOS or view previous newsletters, visit our website at: www.easttexasorchidsociety.com.