



East Texas Orchid Society

"Creating a common bond between orchid enthusiasts in east Texas..."



February 2010, Volume 2, No. 2



Winter Winding Down – Almost Spring Show Time!

Punxsutawney Phil may have seen his shadow this year, but I just can't wait six more weeks for spring! Daffodils are up and Hyacinths will be blooming before we know it. This is the first spring show season for ETOS, and we are lucky to have quite a few shows nearby. From March through May, there will be orchid society shows in held in Monroe, Tyler, Austin, Houston, and Oklahoma City. ETOS will be setting up a display in Tyler, but I encourage all of our members to attend any of the others. If you had to choose only one,



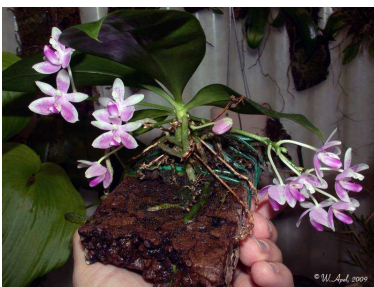
go to OK City. The OK City Show is serving as the AOS Spring Show and members meeting, attracting more exhibitors and more vendors. Orchid shows are a great place to hand select a few new orchids.

With only one more meeting before the CETOS Show in Tyler, I thought I would discuss a genus that we will be seeing a lot of this spring – *Phalaenopsis*. This is a large and diverse group, and one that I had hoped to leave to Olie, our own personal Phal expert. But with spring fast approaching, I'd like to briefly discuss some broad categories or types of *Phalaenopsis* to help understand how they fit into different classes in an orchid show. Because of the variety of this genus, I have expanded this newsletter. The section below will touch on a few species and some basic cultural tips. Page two explores popular breeding trends.



The Genus *Phalaenopsis*

This genus is distributed throughout Southeast Asia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and northern Australia. Comprised of about 50 species, the genus was named for the moth-like appearance of the flowers (from Greek, "phalaina" moth; "-opsis" appearance.) Phals are warm growing epiphytes, usually found growing in deep shade in humid environments. Phals have one active growing point that gives rise to alternating broad fleshy leaves that envelop a short stem. Inflorescences arise from mature leaf axils and can bear from one to several flowers. Some bloom in succession over long periods of time, while others have flowers that seem to open all at once. Plants can have leaves several feet long or leaves that never exceed a few inches. Flower size and texture is highly variable as well. Culture: *Phalaenopsis* can be relatively easy to grow and flower in cultivation provided they are kept from direct light and complete dryness. Species tend to be more sensitive to cultural variations and hybrids tend to be more forgiving and adaptable. Provide warm temperatures and high to average humidity. In nature, many *Phalaenopsis* enjoy monsoon rains during warmer months and a slightly drier and cooler winter. Some varieties require slight shifts in winter temperatures to initiate spring flowering, while others grow well in constant warm temperatures.



Species: The popularity of *Phalaenopsis* has made previously obscure species relatively common in trade. Many popular species are readily available from vendors in the US. Some of the more commonly offered Phal species include *equestris*, *violacea*, *cornu-cervi*, *venosa*, *schilleriana*, *stuartiana*, *tetraspis*, *luddemania*, and many others. Species like *violacea* and

amboinensis bloom in summer and produce medium sized, fragrant, waxy flowers. Others such as *amabilis* produce larger flowers primarily in spring, and are in the background of many modern "big white" hybrids. Species like *equestris* and *stuartiana* produce smaller flowers but make up for their size in numbers of flowers produced.

Photos left, top to bottom: *venosa*, *bellina*, *equestris*, *modesta*

right: *lueddemanniana*, *gigantea*

March ETOS Meeting

DATE: Sunday, March 7, 2010

TIME: 1:30 pm

PLACE: Unity Church, Nacogdoches, TX

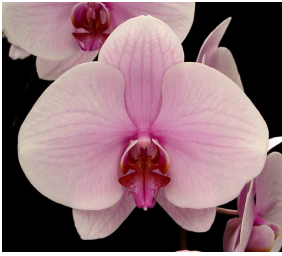
REFRESHMENTS: Open

AGENDA ITEMS:
-CETOS Show in March: available plants
-ETOS Show this fall: assignments
-2010 Meeting Programs
-Orchid Books: ETOS Library

SPEAKER: **John Stubbings, Clown Alley Orchids, Pasadena, TX**

April Meeting: 4-11-10

Hybrids: Phals have also been bred extensively for over one hundred years, creating several popular lines or directions in breeding. Each breeding line attempts to improve or accentuate certain characteristics like size, shape, color, number of flowers, ease of culture, propensity to flower, fragrance, etc. These breeding goals are driven by improvement over current standards, and hybrids are often classified by these breeding categories.



Standard Phals: The ideal traits of a Phalaenopsis flower are large size, round shape, clear/strong color, full flowers, and nice spacing or presentation of flowers along the inflorescence. The attempt to increase size and improve other characteristics through hybridization has been the “standard” breeding direction for Phals. Working within these standards, these other directions have been explored:

Whites and Pinks: Based on the larger flowering species like



amabilis and *shilleriana*, pure white flowers and all shades of pink drove early breeding programs. While always improving shape and form, and increasing size, “big whites” and “big pinks” have been selectively bred to create the huge flowered hybrids we have today.

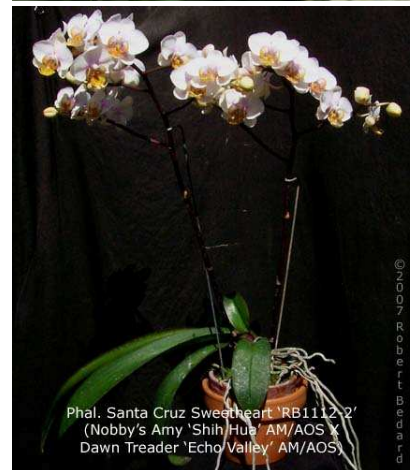
Spots/Stripes: Striped flowers, sometimes referred to as “candy stripes” have been produced in a wide range of colors. Although much of the striping is derived from a miniature species, *P. lindenii*, extensive breeding has produced some nice large striped flowers. Spotted flowers, or “French spots” refer to breeding lines producing flowers with fine spotted patterns. These spots are sometimes evenly distributed, but can be more concentrated toward the center of the bloom (around the column).



Harlequin: Random spotting in blooms is a fairly recent development in Phal breeding. Built on the foundation of the hybrid *P. Golden Peoker*, harlequins have the genes for color production but the gene(s) that regulate color distribution are defective.

Multifloral Phals: Many smaller flowered species have been used to increase the number of flowers produced in hybrids. While these flowers are smaller, the same standards for shape, color, and form still apply. Branching inflorescences can produce a beautiful display. Due to space constraints, many growers prefer smaller plants. While many multifloral hybrids can get quite large, some stay compact lending themselves to windowsill culture or growing under lights.

Novelty Phals: This term usually refers to summer blooming, fragrant Phal hybrids usually involving species like *violacea* and *amboinensis*. It is sometimes used as a catch-all description for plants that don’t fit neatly into current breeding trends. These hybrids produce smaller flowers but with a heavy substance and waxy texture. Perfect for windowsills or light carts, these plants stay relatively compact and flower on shorter spikes.





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March Speaker Confirmed!

ETOS will have our first outside speaker for our meeting program on March 7th. John Stubbings from Clown Alley Orchids in Pasedena, TX has graciously agreed to make the trip from the Houston area to speak to our small group. Mr. Stubbings is the Chief grower and hybridizer of the family business and has many years experience growing orchids. Here are a few excerpts from their website:

[Welcome to the Clown Alley Orchids web site. Clown Alley Orchids is the Stubbings family business started in 1996 near Chicago. In September 2008 we did not celebrate our third anniversary in our new location in Pasadena, Texas. Instead we evacuated from Hurricane Ike which struck home and business on September 13, 2008. Our greenhouse space is much larger. This facility will allow us to better serve you by having a much broader selection to choose from. We also now have a true retail shop.

John is the chief grower and hybridizer. He has been growing orchids for 30 years and concentrates his hybrid work in Cattleya, Phalaenopsis and Galeandra. We have resumed our breeding program in Texas and have some of our seedlings available for sale.

We attend many shows and fairs each year exhibiting and selling orchids suitable for the south. John also gives lectures or presentations throughout the country and the world to various orchid and botanical or garden groups. These talks are either about growing orchids more effectively or about a genera or group of orchid genera.]

Mr. Stubbings will have a variety of plants available for sale on March 7th and has offered a 10% discount on PRE-ORDERS for species and hybrids. This is a great deal on their already reasonably priced plants. Clown Alley has a beautiful and informative website which lists the supplies and plants currently available. I encourage everyone to check out the site and maybe even place a pre-order. Their store is online at: www.clownalleyorchids.com

I hope to see you all on March 7th.

Justin Daniel, Secretary
East Texas Orchid Society

www.aos.org

www.EastTexasOrchidSociety.com

www.swroga.org