



Greater Whorled Pogonia
© All rights reserved

The Newsletter of the **AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY**

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

Volume 27 Issue 4

April 2019

March Meeting

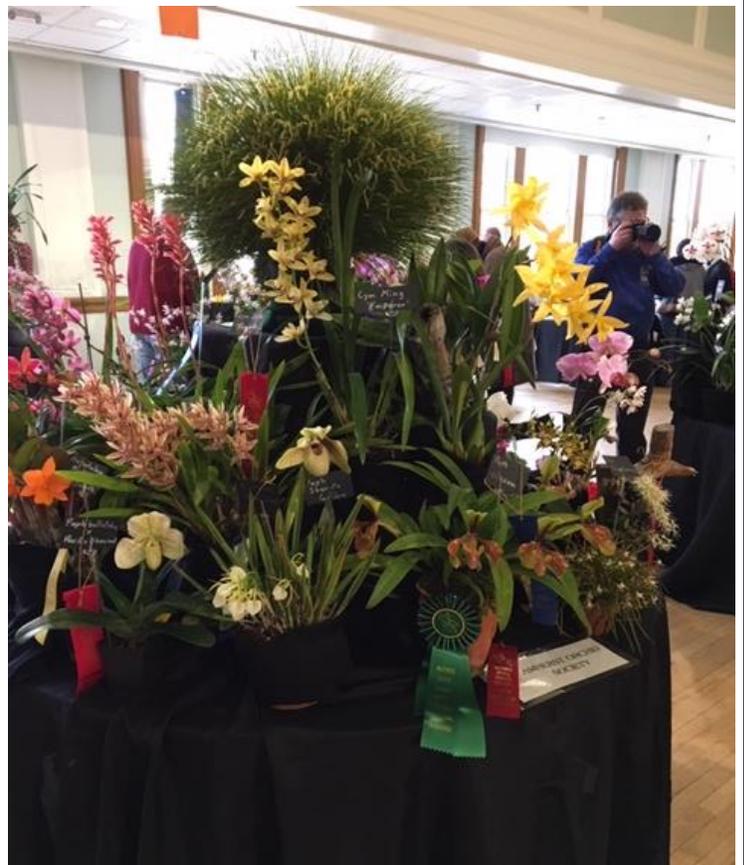
Roger West

Our meeting day started off with inches of snow and freezing rain. Despite this a good size post-show crowd appeared. The past show was discussed along with possible improvements for next year. Treasurer Steve presented a very positive economical show report. Possible improvements would be better lights for the center display, another terrarium and new back drop drapes. The terrarium would be taller than the original one to allow for hanging plants. The black cloth can be ordered from the pole company and fitted accordingly to the pole length. Time limits would be enforced as to when a display would be set up. Marc had to stay until 9 PM on Thursday for one society to finish with their display. This late hour hinders the forms to get printed for the following mornings judging. All in all everybody congratulated our society on putting up a great show.

Other news, Lani Norman reports that all scholarship applications have been presented to area schools and hopefully we will have some applicants for review at the April meeting. The Nutmeg show went well with five members displaying their orchids. For the first time in a long time there was a multitude of orchid genera on the table other than cattleyas. The display looked really nice and I even had help in the take down as Liz volunteered. Ellen Kennedy and Maryanne won three rosettes as best in their respective class.

Return of an Old Friend

The day after our meeting I stopped at the Smith College greenhouses to drop off four cattleya species. As mentioned in a past newsletter, Jimmy Grogan is now running their greenhouses. Since taking over this past May, he has the orchid house looking great. His



Amherst Display at the Nutmeg OS Show

goal is to have specimen orchids of many species on display. He is an obsessive perfectionist about growing orchids. He learned from the best, Bill Hutchinson, having served as Bill's apprentice for a few years, also spending time helping Verda Dale with her collection. Jimmy has already donated some plants to the club as giveaways. There will probably be more in the future as he fine tunes the collection over there. I saw a Den Gatton Sunray plant when I was there. This is the same very large Dendrobium that Joe took a machete too back in November. Jimmy had two of these divisions at the greenhouse, one was grown cool and the other was grown warm. The warm grower was doing real well the cooler one not so much. The warmer grown one had flowering spikes coming off the old pseudobulbs. Of the five divisions that Joe cut up, I have one and it too has a couple of spikes (I think) developing off the old canes. One can only hope!

I'm getting side tracked here, the old friend was finding C Park Ridge "Verda Dale" in bloom in their greenhouse. This was a total surprise to me as I walked through their greenhouse and there it was with three large gorgeous blooms. Jimmy related the story behind a "Verda Dale" showing up in the College's greenhouse. He said that two plants of "Verda Dale" were donated by Mike Trybus's daughter following Mike's death this past fall. For newer members, Mike and Margaet Trybus were very active club members with a large greenhouse. Mike originally received a "Verda Dale" division from me back in the spring of 1997 after I divided the Butterworth award winner. This very large plant had just been granted a CCM of 94 points with 88 large semi-alba blooms on 22 spikes. This was the ultimate "Conway Weed". Mike traded a Phrag Schroderae for the division. Mike did pretty darn good keeping this thing alive for 30 years! I lost my last division a few years back when the pots drainage hole became plugged and she never recovered. Funny thing is that is the only plant that the drainage plugged up, go figure. When Jimmy received the two plants, he cleaned them up, again with the perfectionist. He placed both plants into a single pot. Liz, you are not the only one to do this. I couldn't tell that there were two separate plants all I saw were three really nice blooms. Anyways the plant looked healthy and am pleased that Jimmy is its caretaker. He is looking for any healthy species to add to their collection particularly some Schomburkia species, Lani you have any divisions?



Amherst Display at the Connecticut OS Show

Show Table March 2019

Marc Gray	Dave Marinelli
Blc Dan O'Neil	Brassavola grandiflora
Dendrobium kingianum	Leptotes bicolor
Eria species	Phal cornu-servi 'Chattaladae'
Betsy Higgins	Polystachya longiscapa
Bulbophyllum Elizabeth Ann 'Buckleberry'	Liz Marinelli
Burr Sunkist 'Buttercup'	Cambara Five Acres
Dendrobium Green Lantern 'Red Carpet'	Lc (Sunmist-Kauai Starbright) X Landate
Epidendrum Max Valley	Trichopilia suavis
Lc Carolyn Reid 'Glowing Ember'	Steve Reardon
Oncidium Twinkle	Letotes bicolor
Maryanne Laukaitis	Steve Steiner
Brassavola Jiminy Cricket	Dendrobium kingianum 'Bigfoot'
Dendrobium kingianum pale form	Masdevalia whiteana
Dendrobium linguiforme	Paph bellatum X Pacific Shamrock X Yerba Buena
Dendrobium moniliforme (Shuyo?)	Paph Spice Island 'Krull Smith'
Dinema polybulbon 'Fred Morse'	Platystele ortiziana
Laelia anceps 'white with red lines'	Pleione formosana
Laelia canariensis 'Gloden Glow' HCC/AOS	Pleurothallis lita
Laelia praestans	Propetalum Mathina 'Elizabeth'
Leptotes bicolor	Restrepia sp. 'Paprika'
Paph villosum	Scaphosepulum swertifoliae



Spotlight on the Show Table:

Leptotes bicolor grown by Maryanne Laukatis

And

Leptotes bicolor 4N grown by Dave Marinelli

There were 2 plants on the show table that offered an interesting contrast. Both were the same species, *Leptotes bicolor*, one was Maryanne's beautifully grown specimen just beginning to open with about 15 flowers and buds. The other was Dave's younger plant with three open flowers. The flowers on the two plants looked the same except the ones on Dave's plant were much larger and the lip was a deeper purple color. It turned out that Dave's plant was 4N, meaning it has double the number of chromosomes that would naturally occur in a plant. How does that work? And why are plants with extra chromosomes bigger?

An article in *Orchids* magazine titled "Colchicine Treated Orchids" (*Orchids*, Vol. 83, No. 4, April 2014) offers an explanation. To summarize, 4N plants are

formed when seedlings are treated with colchicine. Colchicine is a chemical derived from a plant that interferes with the mechanism where new cells are formed. When a cell reproduces its DNA in preparation for dividing (going from 2N to 4N) the colchicine prevents a new cell from forming, so that the original cell retains twice the normal amount of DNA. The effect on the plant as a whole is slower growth but the leaves and petals are thicker, the flowers are bigger and more deeply colored.

Both the plants were beautiful, it is a matter of personal preference whether one prefers the larger showier 4N plant or the more subtle natural look of the 2N plant. It might be a quandary for judges- is it fair to judge a 4N plant against a 2N plant of the same species? If there were an Orchid Olympics, would a 4N plant be the horticultural equivalent of an athlete disqualified for a performance enhancing drug? The *Orchids* article offers some guidance for judges, but ultimately they are able to use their own discretion.



New York Botanical Garden Orchid Show: Singapore

By Steve Steiner

The New York Botanical Garden is running its annual orchid show. It started 2/23 and runs until 4/28. It has a different theme each year but is similar each year in its use of orchids as bedding plants. The displays will have hundreds of the same or similar plants used in massed plantings or over archways.

The displays are spread throughout the main greenhouse which covers about an acre under glass. Not all the plants are labeled, but the overall effect is spectacular. Some of the permanent plantings are also breathtaking including a Jade Vine with long racemes of hanging turquoise flowers.

It is crowded during weekends, weekdays are usually less so. If you go this month, be sure to visit the rock garden and the native plant garden.

If you like Italian food, a visit to Arthur Avenue (a short drive) is worth a trip as well.



Next Meeting of the Amherst Orchid Society.....

Sunday, April 14 at 2:00 p.m.

Munson Memorial Library, 1046 S. East Street, Amherst, MA

Those with last names starting with I, J, K, L please bring a dish to share