



Greater Whorled Pogonia

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The Newsletter of the  
**AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY**

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

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## September Meeting

**Roger West**

This month begins the new orchid year. The laid back summer months are behind us, time to get down to business. There are many things to report starting with October being membership renewal month and November being free orchids for the renewals. This year the plants are coming in from Santa Barbara Orchid Estate. President Joe talked about the upcoming show season with emphasis on three March shows, Nutmeg, Conn. and N. H. These follow our show and there is a tendency of a natural letdown, thinking the hard work is over but we need plants for these three shows. There will be a February meeting prior to our show. Treasurer Steve gave an update on the club's economics and was very favorable. This hopefully leads to future speaker possibilities. Everyone wants speakers but it seems as though no one goes out and actually asks them. There were thank you notes from various organizations that the club donated money, also from the two scholarship girls.

Marc has in the new and enlarged black cloth for the show backdrops. Still don't know about Mike and his quest for center display lights

As I walked into the meeting I saw Joe wielding his machete on some orchid plants. They came from Smith College and were *Den kingianums* and hybrids derived from *kingianum*. There were many divisions to go around. Finally the meeting highlight was the show table. No there weren't any large fancy cattleya blooms, matter of fact there were no cattleyas in sight. There were many small bloomers which were unseen from the back row. But one orchid, *Habernaria medusa*, was present. This was the most unusual orchid bloom that I have ever seen. It looked like a milkweed seed floating off into the breeze. Marge had brought in this plant having been gifted from Marc. He relates that he brought three of these plants and his two were only in bud. So if you want to see a different orchid bloom come to the October meeting.

## Show Table September 2019

<p><b>Marc Gray</b>            Bulbophyllum species            Cleisocentron merrillianum            Habenaria xanthochia            Nageliella purpurea</p> <p><b>Betsy Higgins</b>            Lc Toshi's Magic            Ludisia discolor            Oncidium Aztec</p> <p><b>Joe Maciaszek</b>            Den. auriculatum            Phal violacea</p> <p><b>Dave Marinelli</b>            Bulbophyllum species (Papua New Guinea)            Cytorchis arcuata            Oncidium Heavenscent</p> <p><b>Liz Marinelli</b>            Cadetia taylorii            Dendrobium laevifolium            Schoenorchis fragrans</p>	<p><b>Steve Steiner</b>            Dend. Cuthbertsonii X glomeratum            Dend. Victoria reginae            Dtps Ox Black Face            Epi Pacific Padre X Pacific Crest            Macroclinium (Notylia) escobarianum            Maxillaria triloris            Paph Franz Glanz            Paph haynaldianum X lowii            Phal bellina            Phal Jia Ho 'Summer Love'            Phal Yin's Black Eagle 'Wilson'            Pleurothallis flexuosa aurea            Promenaea paranaensis            Restrepia striata 'Waynes'            Restrepia species (from Columbia)            Scaphosepalum species            Trisetella species</p> <p><b>Karen Steward</b>            Brsdm. Nittany Gold 'Dr. John' AM/AOS</p> <p><b>Marge Tanguay</b>            Habenaria medusa</p>
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### ~Next Meeting of the Amherst Orchid Society ~

**Glenn Decker, well known in the orchid community for his expertise in growing and breeding Paphs and Phrags, will be speaking and will have plants to sell.**

Sunday, October 13 at 2:00 p.m. Munson Memorial Library  
 1046 S. East Street, Amherst, MA Those with last names starting with

U, V, W, X, Y, Z please bring a dish to share

*All members who pay their dues at or before the October meeting will receive their free plant at the November meeting.*

Upcoming Meetings: November 10, December 8

## Spotlight on the Show Table:

*Habenaria medusa* grown by Marge Tanguay and

*Habenaria xanthochilum* grown by Marc Gray



The September show table included two species of genera that we don't see very often, *Habenaria medusa* and *Habenaria xanthochila*. Unlike most warm-growing orchids habenarias are ephemeral plants, dying back each year to corms below the soil. *Habenaria medusa* was the more dramatic of the two with its tall inflorescence bearing many deeply fringed spidery white blooms. Habenarias grow on every continent except Antarctica, but these two species are from Southeast Asia.

Marc got the plants from California via EBay and has had them for several years. Their cultural needs are very specific but maybe not difficult to provide, although they have a reputation as temperamental growers. They need distinct wet and dry seasons since they grow naturally in areas that receive monsoon rains during the growing season and are dry the rest of the year. Marc stresses the importance of a dry winter in keeping them alive.

There are several other species of *Habenaria* that have vivid colors on the pink to red spectrum. In recent years there have been many advances in hybridizing both within the genus and intergenerics. Orchids magazine has articles by Leon Glicenstein in the August 2018 and August 2019 issues that explore the directions that his hybridization is taking, plus giving some useful cultural information.



*At the September meeting the club members who attended were excited to receive divisions of some Dendrobium kingianum plants that had been de-accessioned by the greenhouse at Smith College. These plants had been donated to Smith by Dr Wilford Neptune, who passed away in 2010. Here is an article by Dr Neptune on kingianum culture, reprinted with permission of the Massachusetts Orchid Society:*

## **Culture of *Dendrobium kingianum* By Dr. Wilford Neptune**

Although I grow 155 genera, this is my favorite of all the orchids. It is a neat, compact, attractive plant, even when not in bloom, and it is easy to grow and rewards one with an array of beautiful, long lasting, fragrant flowers in shades of white, white with colored lip, yellow, and plain and splash petals in mauve, pink, and purple.

This plant will grow vegetatively at any temperature, any light, and any kind of watering and feeding- but if one wishes it to bloom to its fullest potential, then it MUST be grown cool (min night temp in autumn and winter below 50F); maximum light; lots of water when growing; and lots of food, but never in a high Nitrogen ratio.

Dendrobium kingianum grows normally down to 35F (will tolerate temps down to 29F), so I put mine outside in April (Boston area), in full east sun; and it comes back inside in Nov. After blooming, all keikis are removed, as well as old flower spikes, and the new developing keikis are left on as they will remain uniform in size and will increase the amount of flowers. All dendrobiums will produce keikis, however kingianum varies from clone to clone, and within reason this has nothing to do with culture. This is in contrast to nobiles, which make excessive keikis with too much N, or not enough sunshine. Certain clones, such as 'Ruth' AM/AOS, and 'Roy' AD/AOC/QOS-HCC/AOS, produce multiple keikis and if these are not removed after blooming the keikis make keikis, and these make keikis and soon there is a veritable weed patch. 'Karl Marx' rarely makes keikis and when it does they are small, and on removing may behave like seedlings out of flask and take 3 to 5 years to bloom; whereas the usual keiki after removal can be planted and will make a new growth, perhaps a keiki, and all will usually bloom the following season. The pot is watered enough to keep it moist, and during hot weather this may be every day. It is fed 100ppm of N/gal/wk, in a low N ratio, as 9-30-25. All are potted in a bark mix, and in plastic, Azalea type pots.

The plant is brought inside in Nov, to a cool house (min night temp of 46F) and water is withheld until buds start to develop (6-8 weeks). At this time, I spray the leaves once or twice a week, and when the buds can be recognized I resume watering the pot, once a week, and after the flowers open I resume watering to keep the plant evenly moist. I do not fertilize until the flowers are open. I have learned by trial and error that some clones can be watered the entire year, and bloom well ('Ruth' and 'Roy'); others behave as the book advises and must be dried out if they are to bloom; and this varies in both natural and outcrosses.

If the conditions can be met for the culture of this plant, I believe it should be in every collection.

## Remembering Dr. Wilford Neptune (1921-2010)

Wilford Neptune began growing orchids in 1972 and they soon became a passion. He grew many orchid genera, but his favorite was *Dendrobium kingianum*, a species native to Australia. He had forty-two named clones and was proud of his hybridizing efforts. His crosses “Trident's Baby” and “Conference 82” received FCC awards.

Besides lecturing and publishing on orchid culture, Dr. Neptune exhibited at orchid shows throughout the Northeast. His awards include a Gold Medal for culture from the RHS, nine AOS Show Trophies, and 117 AOS awards for individual plants, of which 40 were for culture.

Dr. Neptune shared divisions and keikis of his prized plants with most anyone who asked. He had a lot of patience, answering questions and offering advice. He is remembered for his devotion to family, love of orchids, and whistling. In 2000, he received a lifetime achievement award from the Massachusetts Orchid Society.



*President Joe wielding his machete on some of the Dendrobiums*

