



Greater Whorled Pogonia

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The Newsletter of the **AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY**

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

Volume 29 Issue 1

January/February 2021

Announcements

Annual show and sale

Due to the uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the board of directors has made the decision to cancel the annual show and sale that is normally held in February. In addition, no monthly meetings will be held at Munson Library until further notice.

2021 Dues

The board of directors have decided to suspend dues payment for this year (2021). However, there are fixed expenses that the club must meet such as the rent for the storage space at Munson Library. For that reason, payment of dues would be welcomed. Current dues stand at \$25.00 for an individual and \$30.00 for a family membership. Mail to:

Steve Reardon

157 Shea Road

West Brookfield, MA 01585-2605

American Orchid Society First Speakers' Day

Day of Orchid Culture- Saturday February 6, online starting at 11:00 am

Speakers and Topics include:

- **Growing Miniatures with Dr. Kristen Uthus**
- **Geography and Culture of Brazilian Orchids with Francisco Miranda**
- **Those Pesky Bugs with Dr. Ron McHatton**
- **Growing Fabulous Paphiopedilums with Dave Sorokowsky**
- **Dendrobium Culture with Alan Koch**

All registrants will be entered to win prizes on the Orchid Wheel of Chance

Click here for more information and to register:

<https://www.aos.org/news-and-events/event-calendar/2021/2021->

Conservation Projects Supported by Our Society

By Steve Reardon, Treasurer

Our Society makes donations each year to orchid conservation projects. One organization we contribute to is the Orchid Conservation Alliance (OCA). The Alliance has helped purchase land reserves in Brazil, Ecuador, and Colombia. For its size, Ecuador is the most biodiverse country on earth. It holds about 8% of all species of amphibians on Earth and 16% of bird species - all in a country about the size of Arizona. Colombia and Ecuador contain 25 percent (7,000) of the world's known orchid species.

EcoMinga Foundation maintains/protects eleven reserves located on the edge of the Amazon basin in east central Ecuador and those on the super-wet western Andean slopes of the Chocó Biogeographical Region. There are less than ten percent of the Chocó region rainforests left standing. Fourteen *Dracula* species have become extinct due to deforestation. These eleven reserves cover all elevations (limestone foothills to cloud forests) from 1100m (3600 ft.) to 3860m (12,600 ft.). OCA collaborates with EcoMinga in helping to achieve their common goal in identifying, developing, and protecting orchid reserves. The OCA has raised money for The *Dracula* Reserve, Reserve Yumartán (Colombia), Reserva Serra Bonita (Brazil), The Ecuador Orchid Gap Analysis Project and Reserva Rio Anzu (Ecuador).

In 2015, the EcoMinga *Dracula* Reserve Project was created. The project is managed and owned by EcoMinga Foundation, which is an Ecuadorian foundation dedicated to the conservation of the foothill forests and alpine grasslands of the Andes. Because The Rainforest Trust has recognized the exceptional value of this reserve and EcoMinga's ability to manage it, they are donating grants to also help expand the *Dracula* Reserve.

The *Dracula* Reserve is located in the Chocó Rainforest in northwestern Ecuador. The Chocó is one of the last coastal tropical rainforests on Earth, a region regarded as one of the most biodiverse places in the world and one of the most vulnerable, with many unique species that evolved in isolation after the tectonic activity of the Andes separated the region from the Amazon Basin millions of years ago. 122 new species of orchids have recently been identified and 43 of the species are endemic. The *Dracula* Reserve is located in a valley with lush green landscapes of forests and mountains, approximately one degree north of the equator, which includes mid- and high-level elevation holdings that serve as the center of diversity for the orchid genus *Dracula*.

Currently the OCA has the goal of raising \$55,000, to expand the holdings of EcoMinga's Rio Anzu Reserve. This is a particularly appropriate goal for the OCA since it was the first reserve that the OCA supported and it was EcoMinga's first reserve. The \$55,000 goal is to help purchase 120 acres. This land is a little more expensive than usual because it is close to a road and has substantial timber resources. What makes it particularly desirable is its lower elevation than most of EcoMinga's other reserves, and having a different library of orchids and other types of plants and animals. It is in this area that several new *Masdevallias*, among them *M. stigii* and *M. loui*, were discovered as well as the plants that led to the description of the new orchid genus, *Quechua*. *M. stigii* has not been seen since it was discovered.

More information may be found at <https://orchidconservationalliance.org/> Donations may also be made through their website or through our Society.

Conservation is our responsibility

References:

Orchid Conservation Alliance (<https://orchidconservationalliance.org>)

EcoMinga Foundation (<https://ecomingafoundation.wordpress.com>)

The Rainforest Trust (<https://www.rainforesttrust.org>)

Book review

Pleurothallids: Neotropical Jewels by Adam Karremans and Sebastian Vieira Uribe

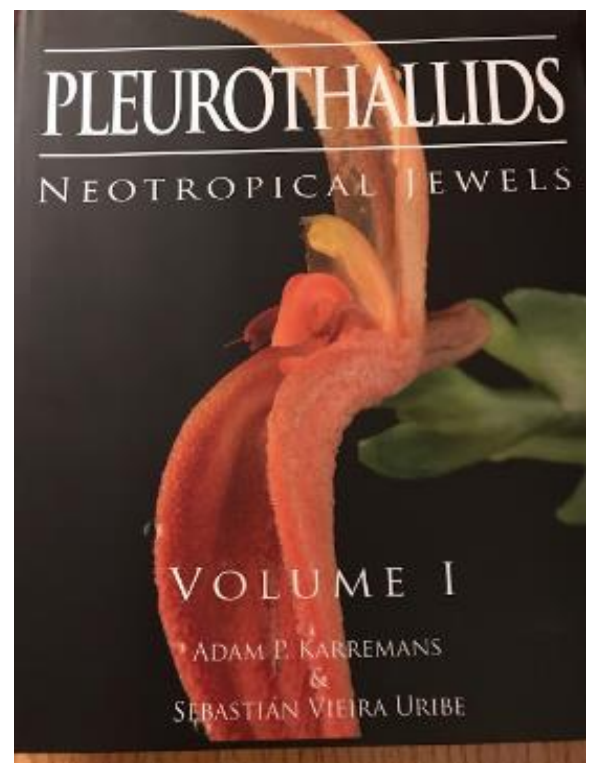
By Steve Steiner

I just finished reading the first volume of a new series of books on Pleurothallids. The book is 300 pages containing about a thousand of the most spectacular photos of these tiny flowers. The book is stunning and although the book reviewer in Orchids magazine did not want to disparage this important work by calling it a “coffee table book”, it is pretty enough to be one.

On the downside, it is expensive (\$128), and while the flowers look spectacular, there is no scale to judge the actual size of the bloom, except for those photos that showed the whole plant. While the authors give a range in altitude for the genus, for me, as a grower, knowing if a species is a warm or cool grower would be helpful.

Of the 17 genera covered, I grow only 3 plants from the genus Specklina. I once had a plant (of blessed memory) now classified as Muscarella. Most of these plants are not commonly grown.

If you only have minimal interest in this group of plants, you should leaf through the book in the society library. I, for one, will eagerly await the next volume.



Orchids in the News

“The World’s Ugliest Orchid” ...so dubbed by Kew Gardens, where they have seen an orchid or two and know what they are talking about. Officially named *Gastrodia agnicellus*, the leafless ground orchid was discovered recently in Madagascar and has been described in the press as “a soul-sucking eyeless worm”, “a moldy paper bag” (Livescience), “nature’s mistake” (Genetic Literacy Project), “a gape-mouthed whale shark with strep throat” (Atlas Obscura). The new discovery might appeal to the far fringes of orchid enthusiasts, but will probably not be a candidate for prom corsages. Read more about this orchid and the rest of Kew’s list of newly discovered plants: <https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/top-10-species-named-2020>



Drop Us a Line....

.... Or a photo or a book review, or cultural hints, or your musings on your favorite plants. In these days of isolation, your input is especially welcome! No article is too brief- send to ewmarinelli@comcast.net



Masdevallia Gypsy
Betsy Higgins



Blc Melody Fair 'Carol'
Betsy Higgins



Mediocalcar decoratum
Steve Steiner



Neofinetia falcata
Marc Gray



Bc Binosa
Maryanne Laukaitis



Laelia anceps
Maryanne Laukaitis



Stanhopea
Marc Gray



Brassavola hybrid
Marc Gray



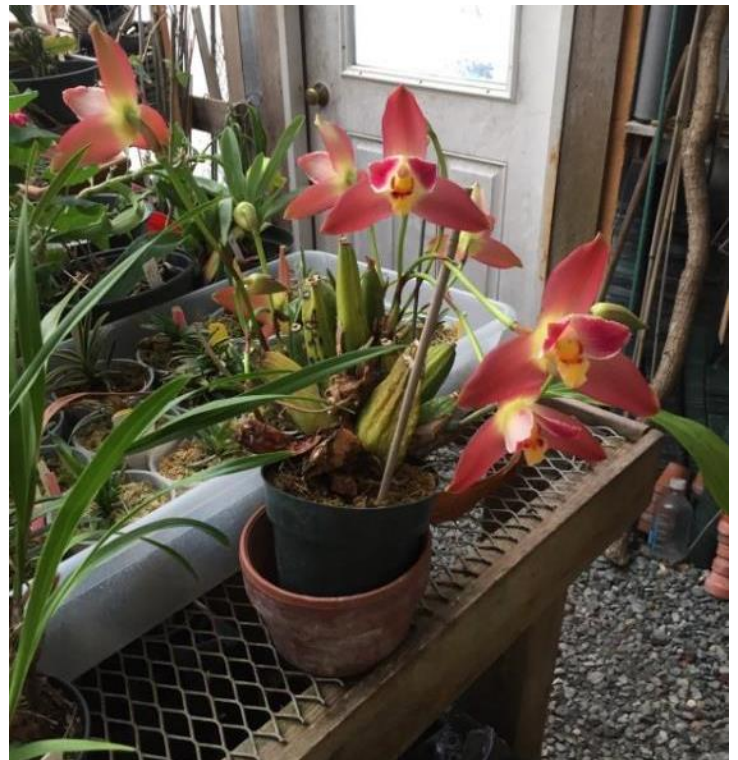
Cymbidium erythrostylum
Maryanne Laukaitis



Laelia autumnalis
Maryanne Laukaitis



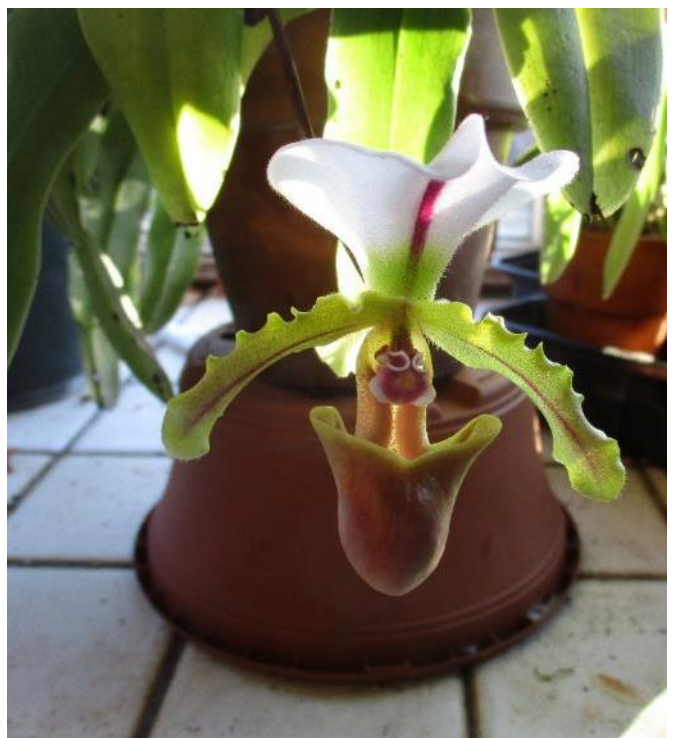
Bulbophyllum
Marc Gray



Lysudamuloa Red Jewel
Marc Gray



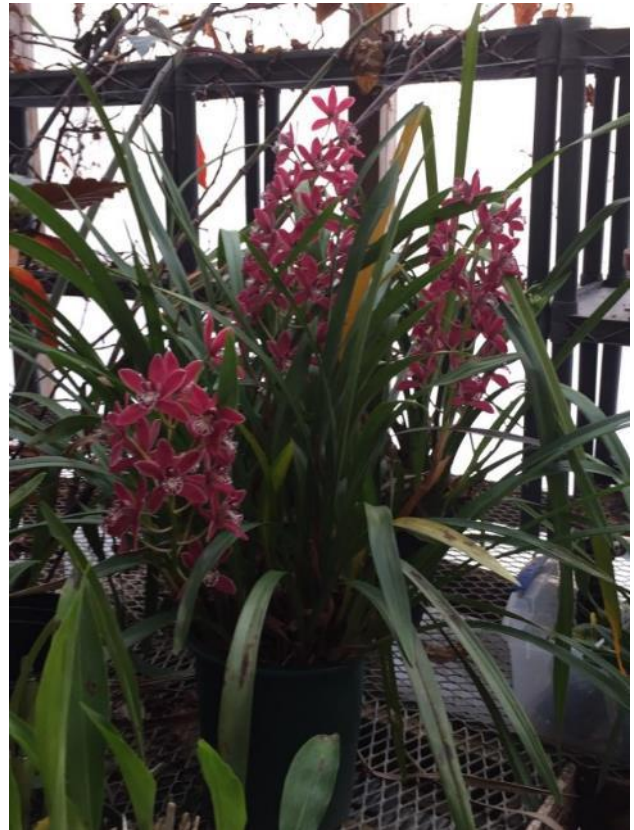
Paphiopedilum hybrid
Marc Gray



Paph spicerianum
Maryanne Laukaitis



Paph insigne
Maryanne Laukaitis



Cymbidium
Marc Gray



Orchid
Display

Maryanne
Laukaitis



Dendrobium Star King 'Irvine'
Liz Marinelli



Masdevallia Pink Mist
Liz Marinelli



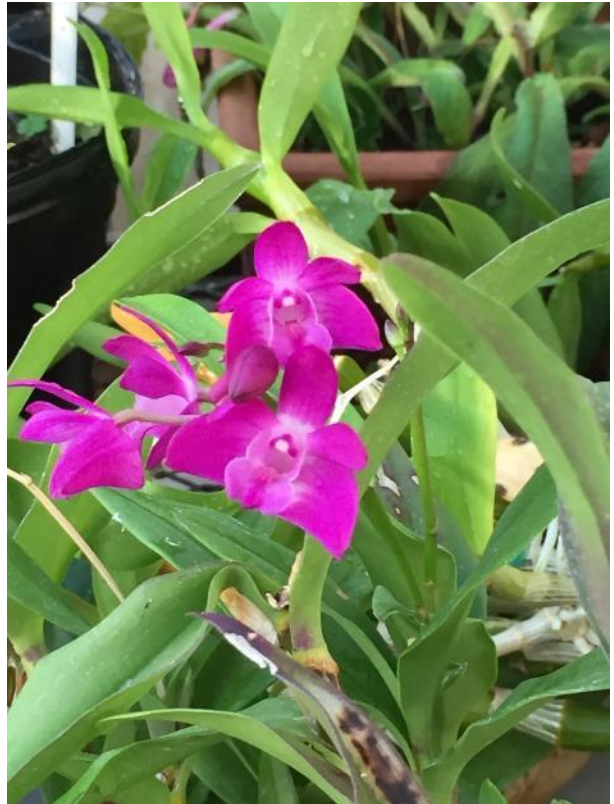
Dendrobium hybrid
Liz Marinelli



Sophronitis cernua
Marc Gray



Dendrobium bellatulum
Liz Marinelli



Dendrobium kingianum
Marc Gray



Phrag. Eumelia Arias
Liz Marinelli



Bounty From the Garden
Maryanne Laukaitis