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# OSGKC News

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## OSGKC June 14th Meeting: Lauris Rose from Orchids at Cal, "Orchids from A to Z"

By Glenn Lessenden

Lauris Rose began her commercial orchid career in the 1970's. In 1987, she and her husband, Jim, purchased their own nursery. Thus began Cal~Orchids.

Lauris has always been active in the orchid world, lecturing and traveling for shows and sales. She was last in Kansas City a year and a half ago when Jim spoke at the OSGKC and Mid-America Orchid Congress Conference. Lauris' talk at our June meeting will spotlight some of the orchids, both common and unusual, being grown at Cal~Orchids. Plants can be pre-ordered for delivery at the meeting. Go to the company's website: <http://www.calorchid.com/> to view their catalog.

We will be taking Lauris for barbecue Saturday evening. I'll email the details later. We'll also be going to 75<sup>th</sup> Street Brewery for socializing after the Sunday meeting.

## Luiz Hamilton Talks of "Saving and Growing Cattleyas"

From the November 2007 issue of *Orchidacea*, newsletter of the Triangle Orchid Society at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham, NC

Luiz Hamilton lives in Fort Lauderdale and works as a customer service rep in the aerospace industry. However, he calls himself as Brazilian. He grew up in Brazil with a grandmother [who] loved to grow roses and who gave him his first orchid when he was nine. When he was 12, he was living in Manus, in the heart of the Brazilian jungle where the Rio Negro flows into the Amazon. His father built a lath house, and Luiz began his first serious species collection. Years later, when he left Brazil to attend the University of Minnesota,

he took the best of his plants with him – all 400 of them. He set up a growing area in his dorm room, utilizing space on the upper bunk and even under the bed. He says that now he cannot



*Pseudobulbs of a bifoliate cattleya*

imagine life without his orchids. Pointing to a huge pie chart, Luiz introduced his presentation by showing that wholesale orchid sales now generate \$130 million each year in the U.S. alone. They are the second most popular pot plant sold, second only to Poinsettias. Eighty percent of the orchid market is now made up of Phals and Dendrobiums from the various Asian markets, and the once popular large flowered Cattleyas have lost market share. Luiz however remains committed to Cattleyas, and will be speaking at the World Orchid Congress in Miami next year on their Conservation. His message will be that the best way to save these wonderful species is to cultivate and propagate them in private collections. He believes that by selling the best specimens, by utilizing sib crossings, back crossings and polyploid genetics, we can maintain living populations of these plants.

To understand the cultivation needs of Catts, Luiz says that we must remember that they come from two basic environments – the hot and steamy Amazon basin and the rolling mountains of the Brazilian highlands. Catts from these two widely differing climates require significantly different

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care. We can only grow our orchids well if [we] understand their different requirements. Most bifoliate Catts come from the Amazon Basin where the climate remains uniformly hot with no significant night time cooling, and where one can count on daily late afternoon rains. Unifoliate Catts, however, come from the Highlands, from elevations between 2 – 3,000 feet, where there is always an appreciable night time cooling.

Regardless of origin, all Catts have five basic requirements. They



Unifolia - C. maxima in sheath

need constant, gentle air movement. Your growing area must have fans running constantly to keep the air circulating. Secondly, they require high light conditions, with no more than 40% shading. Third, the unifoliate especially require a night time drop in temperature of 20 – 25 degrees, something very hard to achieve here in North Carolina. Fourth, they require high humidity levels. Luiz explained that by humidity he does not mean that we need to water frequently, but rather that we need to increase the percentage of humidity in the air around the plants by misting several times a day

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during our very hot summers. Fifth, and perhaps most important, orchids require good quality water. Luiz described the daily root flushing that is given to orchids in the wild, when the afternoon rains drench the plant and flush away any accumulated salts that could potentially contaminate the roots. The water you use, says Luiz, should be slightly acid, with a Ph of 6 – 6.6 ppm dissolved solids. Additionally, because the soil in Brazil has a very high iron content, our Cattleyas do better if we provide iron through our watering regime. The addition of calcium will also help prevent fungal infections and black rot.

Luiz classifies Cattleyas based on ease of culture and flowering. The most adaptable plants he says are for beginners. These include amethystoglossa, intermedia, loddigesii, harrisoniana, guttata, labiata, and warneri. These plants grow over a large geographic area and have adapted themselves to different growing conditions. They are therefore the most flexible. Beginner Cattleyas like very bright conditions and can be grown with as little as 50% shade. They thrive at temperatures between 50 to 100 degrees. They prefer high humidity levels, but can adapt to drier environments. They like constant air movement, a well drained mix, and a dry spell after flowering. It is critical to cut back on your watering regime during the winter

months or the roots will become waterlogged and rot.

Intermediate Cattleyas include forbesii, granulosa, leopoldii, porphyroglossa, schilleriana, schofeldiana, jenmanii, luteola and lawrenceana. They like bright light, warm temperatures, and lots of air movement. These species absolutely must have a dry rest period during the winter and they

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r.f. Orchids  
Windy Hill Gardens  
Whippoowill Orchids

### Beginners' Group

The beginners will meet at 1:00 before the regular meeting. We will discuss Phalaenopsis. Last year, all beginners received a Phal. seedling. Bring your plant to the meeting and compare your culture.  
Fred Bergman

### OSGKC Meeting Minutes: May 3, 2009

by Holly Hall

Fred Bergman is in St. Josephs Hospital with pneumonia. Our thoughts and prayers are with him. Thanks to Cindy and Dan for covering the beginners group.

Many thanks to Lance Jesse, Jami Parkison, Tony King and Jason Thoren for their participation in the growers' tour.

Next month Lauris Rose from Cal-Orchids is coming.

Motion to purchase divisions from the Missouri Botanical Gardens to resell to OSGKC members in order to raise money for the society was passed.

Tony King, editor of OSGKC's web site, reports that he is still looking for good photographs for the web site. If you have a digital image of an orchid that you would like to share with the society, contact Tony: cheftonyking@yahoo.com.

require a rapidly draining mix. They are not as tolerant of temperature variations and abuses in watering as the beginner plants.

The connoisseur collection of Cattleyas tend to be plants that are only found in relatively isolated conditions and therefore have not adapted as well as other, more widely distributed species. They are by far the most difficult Cattleyas to grow and include aclandiae, bicolor, dormaniana, elongate, nobilior, tenuis, vestalis, violacea,

*Life Style of a Winner:  
Culture Tips for the Plant  
of the Month, May 2009*

**O**rchid: Epidendrum Lee Ward  
'Hawaii' x Encyclia cordigera

**Growers:** Al Clinton and Susie  
Hanna

**Watering:** This plant has large  
pseudobulbs so the key is rapid-  
drying after watering. It's planted in  
a shallow pot on a bed of sphagnum  
with an inch of styrofoam pellets for  
good drainage.

**Temperature** (include info on differ-  
ential temp needs): Intermediate.

**Light:** Bright, grown in the winter  
near HPS light, and about 3500 fc  
of sunlight in the summer.

**Fertilizing:** DynaGro 7-9-5 used  
weekly, weakly.

**Atmosphere** (i.e., breezy or not,  
etc.): Light breeze.



**Special features** (i.e., scented, etc.):  
Scented, very long-lasting and many  
flowers, 64 flowers when shown at  
the May OSGKC meeting.

**Where can this orchid be pur-  
chased?** Don't know. Given to us by  
another member, Rick Day.

**Other helpful and/or interesting  
information about this orchid:** This

is a cross of Epi Lee Ward is a cross  
of two species, E. adenocaula x E.  
tampensis by the Hawaiian hybrid-  
izer, W.W. Goodale Moir, who  
registered more than 1,200 crosses.  
Lee Ward was then crossed with the  
species E. cordigera. This has been  
a mutual growing experience for  
both of us (and the plant too!).

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*"Cattleyas," con't from pg. 2*

walkeriana, eldorado, and araguaiensis. Several of these species are now quite rare and exist only in specialty collections. Like beginners and intermediates, they like bright light (50% shade). They like nighttime temps no lower than 70 degrees and daytime temperatures no higher than 90. Nobilior and walkeriana are exceptions to this rule in that they can tolerate temperatures as low as 50 degrees. These plants need 50% humidity, and require a dry period after flowering or during winter. The exception to the dry period are violacea and vestalis, both of whom thrive with constant moist air. Nobilior, aclandiae, violacea and walkeriana grow best mounted, although there are hot and cool growing varieties of nobilior.

Laelia purpurata is another Brazilian native that is caught up in the taxonomic name changes that have occurred over the past several years. Currently classified as Sophronitis purpurata, Luiz stated that a case will be made for reclassification to Cattleya purpurata at the WOC next January. Regardless of name,

purpuratas are very adaptable. They can tolerate temperature ranges from 30 to 100 degrees, and can even be given a dry winter rest. They prefer year round watering, however, as they are endemic to areas with heavy rainfall. Luis pointed out that they require temperature variations up to 20 degrees between day and night.

In conclusion Luis made several predictions about the future of Cattleyas. He believes that selective breeding will produce more compact plants with larger flowers. The flowers will last longer and many will have the sparkle of diamond dust. Inflorescences will be longer and less crowded and many more varieties will be fragrant. The plants will be easier to grow and bloom, and many will bloom several times each year. These new improved plants will be disease resistant, and they will grow rapidly, adding multiple growths each year.

*Transcription by Joy Lemieux ,  
Sandhills Orchid Society.*

*[Thanks to Susie Hanna for suggesting this  
article.]*

**Harold Bayse, Jami Parkison and  
Monica McNamara will provide  
refreshments for June's meeting.**

