

Southern California Orchid Species Society

www.socalorchidspecies.com

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Newsletter

Roberta Fox
roberta@orchidcentral.net
(714)435-8015

**Newsletter deadline is the 25th
of the month prior to the month
of issue.**

Meeting is 2nd Sunday of each month, at 2 PM
Kraemer Memorial Park
Backs Community Building, Main Room
201 N. Bradford Ave., Placentia
(Chapman and Bradford, parking off Bradford)

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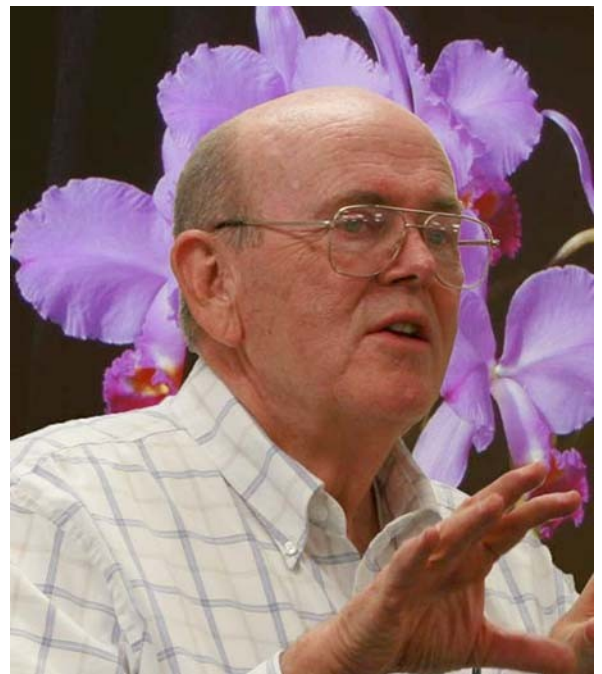
Cattleyas Around the Year

Gene Crocker

Gene Crocker grew up in the northwestern part of South Carolina, not far from where he worked for 25 years as Vice-President of Carter and Holmes Orchids in Newberry, S.C. (He retired in December of 2010, but his home is only a three minute walk from the greenhouses.) He obtained his first orchid plants in 1956, when he was 15 years old. These first plants were cattleyas, his first love, but he has an interest in all orchid genera.

After graduating from Clemson University in Textile Chemistry, he obtained a second degree in Meteorology from Penn State and served as a weather forecaster in the U.S. Air Force. He worked as Laboratory Manager for Cannon Mills, famous manufacturer of sheets and towels, for twenty years before joining Carter and Holmes in 1986.

As an amateur orchidist, Gene developed an interest in hybridizing, producing his first Cattleya hybrids in 1961. The creative aspects of orchid breeding have been very enjoyable and rewarding for him, always giving something to anticipate. For over 25 years he has carried on the breeding program at Carter and Holmes started in the 1950's by Bill Carter. Many of his hybrids have been awarded by the AOS, including two that received FCC's and one cross that received an Award of Quality. His Doritaenopsis Newberry Parfait 'Picotee' received an Award of Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society and has been popular in the "pot



See: **Gene Crocker**, Page 2

Gene Crocker, from Page 1

plant" trade throughout the world. Gene has traveled extensively, representing Carter and Holmes at various orchid conferences around the world. Perhaps his most enduring claim to orchid fame is the fact that he coined the term, "mericlone", in 1964. In 2013 he was recognized by the American Orchid Society for outstanding accomplishments in orchid hybridizing.

Cattleya species and their hybrids have predictable bloom seasons. Gene will discuss how these can enable you to have a collection that will give blooms around the year.

Speaker's Choice

March speaker Nick Braemer selected *Dendrobium aphyllum*, grown by Richard Hess, as his Speaker's Choice. Richard grows this hanging high in his greenhouse. It receives little water all winter. The flowers emerge on the leafless canes. Richard acquired this plant a few years ago at one of the annual auctions of SCOSS. This shows what wonderful plants one can acquire at our auctions!

According to Charles Baker in *Orchidwiz*, *Den. aphyllum* grows over a wide area of southeast Asia, and at a wide range of altitudes. In India and Nepal they are found at around 3300 ft. (1000 m). In Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos and Vietnam they are found over a range from 500-4200 ft. (150-1300 m) In China they grow from 3300-5900 ft (1000-1800 m) This species is also known as *Den. pierardii*.

Because of this wide range of habitat, while clearly the plant can be happy in a greenhouse, it can also grow well outside. It does require a winter rest, with



Dendrobium aphyllum

no fertilizer and reduced water. Because we do have periods of extremely low humidity, the plant should receive some water to avoid becoming desiccated. In winter, in its native habitat, there is very little rain but there is morning dew.

From the Member's Corner

There were no guests in March. Thank you to everyone who paid their dues. The plants ordered from Gene Crocker at Carter and Holmes will be at the meeting for pickup. If you have not paid for them, please see me first. Thank you. Also don't forget snacks and a big thank you to Yolanda for handling the refreshments. See you in April!!

Edie Gulrich, Membership Secretary

President's Message

My thanks to Nick for his presentation on how he grows his orchids. Useful tips for all of us. We all have some to share I'm sure. I'll be looking into a different shade cloth set up for my own plants and a more regular feeding.

Someone bought tickets to the Ramona Pageant without checking my calendar so I won't be with you at the next meeting. Have fun without me. But not too much.

Tim Roby, President

Editor's Potting Bench

The coming of spring marks the end of show season and the time of massive acquisition of new orchids. (There are still opportunities, of course. The Spring Garden Show at South Coast Plaza Bear St.—Crystal Court—will have quite a few orchid vendors, including Andy's Orchids and Cal Orchid.) Now, we can enjoy the fruits of our labors on acquisitions from prior years. With a bit of luck, those plants that we purchased in bloom last year are following their cycle and rewarding our efforts by blooming again. For me, even more thrilling are those that have matured enough to bloom for the first time. Perhaps it is the "proud parent" phenomenon.

I sought out *Dendrobium papilio* after seeing Peter Lin's plant at one of our meetings (it was Speaker's Choice in March, 2011). That 4" flower dancing on a flexible, leafless 1/8" cane was mesmerizing. Mine put on a fantastic show for me, with five flowers, four of which were open at the same time. I found, however, that this is one that is difficult to share, making seeing Peter's plant all the more special. Each flower last about a week, so that short life means that the odds of having it prime for a meeting are not great. And the flowers have a bad habit of partially closing starting around 4 PM. Forget about taking it to an evening meeting. I think it will be spent by the April Species meeting (it may bloom again in a couple of months) but if it goes anyplace it's going to have to be at SCOSS, to catch it when it is awake.

Mediocalcar is charming genus from Papua New Guinea. You saw a fine example of *Mediocalcar decoratum* in February brought by Nancy Benay (Speaker's Choice). That one is the species most often seen, with its yellow and red "candy corn" flowers. I bought a plant of *Mediocalcar versteegii* two years ago in San Francisco, and it bloomed for me. This one has flowers of a similar shape, but the tips of the segments are white instead of yellow. It was particularly thrilling to



Dendrobium papilio

me, since I saw this species when I was in Papua New Guinea. Unlike *Med. decoratum*, which grows in clumps, this one is a rambler, with flowers far apart on the canes. It is more cold-tolerant than *Med. decoratum* (which I have also been growing outside, but after seeing Nancy's greenhouse-grown plant, and some down at Andy's in a sheltered area, I conclude that one needs to be warmer.) *Med. versteegii* has been doing fine outside.

Cattleya trianae has finally bloomed for me. *C. trianae* var. *amesiana* has been with me for about seven years. When I acquired it, I really knew nothing about *Cattleya*

See: **Edotor's Potting Bench**, Page 4

Editor's Potting Bench, from Page 3

species. so this one is a survivor. I guess I finally put it in a location that it liked. I have also been potting all of my Cattleyas in bark, having experimented with vari-



Medicalcar versteegii

ous combinations of diatomite, perlite, and coconut husk chips, and found all of them wanting. I am seeing much better and consistent growth on all of my Catts now.

Another recent treat this spring was the release of a new book by Harold Koopowitz, in which the "George and Matilda" stories from *Orchid Digest*, and some that have not been published anywhere before, are compiled. Those who have subscribed to *Orchid Digest* for a number of years will recall these delightful short stories built around discoveries and events of the early days of orchid collecting. Now they're all in one place!

One of my pet peeves is the broad misuse of scientific terminology in popular news sources. One reads "There are various theories about the disappearance of Flight MH 370". Baloney. There are no such things... a theory is not a "guess". An assertion that can be shown to be true or false is a hypothesis. If a statement is not verifiable, it just an opinion or idle speculation, not even a hypothesis. If a group of re-

lated hypotheses are shown to be true (for instance, to describe observed phenomena) they may be used to develop a theory that establishes a relationship between the valid hypotheses. Beyond the verification of the underlying hypotheses, a significant measure of the accuracy of a theory is determined by its ability to predict phenomena not yet observed. For instance, Newton's Theory of Gravitation was validated by the discovery of Neptune from discrepancies in the orbit of Uranus. Alfred Russel Wallace cited Darwin's Theory of Evolution by Natural Selection in 1867 to predict that the Madagascan moth *Xanthopan morganii* would be discovered to be the pollinator of *Angraecum sesquipedale*, with its long proboscis able to reach the nectar at the base of the flower's spur. In 1903 a population of those hawk moths was discovered with a particularly long proboscis, determined to be a subspecies, and was named *Xanthopan morganii praedicta* in honor of Wallace's prediction.

To view a discussion of the history of "Darwin's moth", check out the YouTube video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMz6IApJgu4>

To view the moth in action check out this one.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMVN1EWxfAU>

(If you are clicking on the link and your computer asks you if it is really OK, yes, all of the links in this newsletter are safe.)

Roberta Fox, Editor

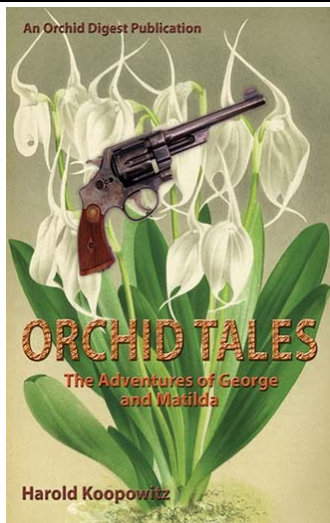


Cattleya trianae var. amesiana

Calendar of Events

* See flyer at www.socalorchidspecies.com, select the [Events](#) link

- **San Diego County Cymbidium Society Annual Auction***
April 5; Preview 11:30 AM, Auction begins 12:00 PM
Lake San Marcos—Lake Pavilion, 1105 La Bonita Dr., San Marcos
Info: orchldy1@mac.com or 760-732-0055
- **Central Coast Orchid Show***
April 5-6; Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-5
South County Regional Center, 800 W. Branch St, Arroyo Grande
Info: www.fcos.org or 805-929-5749
- **South Coast Plaza Spring Garden Show**
April 24-28
3333 Bear St., Costa Mesa, CA 92626 (Crystal Court)
www.springgardenshow.com
- **Palomar Orchid Society Annual Auction***
May 17; Preview 10:00 AM, Auction begins 11:00 AM
The Pavilion at Lake San Marcos, 1105 La Bonita Dr, San Marcos
Info: www.palomarorchid.org
- **Orchid Digest Speakers Day**
June 14—Save the Date!!
“Orchids Around the World”
- **Cal Orchid Open House**
July 11-13
1251 Orchid Dr., Santa Barbara
www.calorchid.com
- **Santa Barbara Orchid Estate Open House**
July 11-13
1250 Orchid Dr., Santa Barbarta
www.sborchid.com



New! Published by Orchid Digest

ORCHID TALES

The Adventures of George and Matilda

by Harold Koopowitz

Available from Amazon.com in [paperback](#) or for [Kindle](#)

These vendors have generously supported our Society at the last Auction, and throughout the year. Please support them with your business. When you visit them, let them know that you are a member of our society. They need to know that our Society supports them.

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<p>Casa de las Orquideas Contact: Nancy Batchman 170 S Nardo Av Solana Bch, CA 92075 858-755-7572, www.orquideas.com</p>	<p>Diamond Orchids Contact: Peter Lin 834 Featherwood Dr Diamond Bar, CA 91765 909-396-0334, www.diamondorchids.com</p>	<p>Ecuagenera Contact: Ivan Portilla info@ecuagenera.com Cuenca, Ecuador , www.ecuagenera.com</p>
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