

# Southern California Orchid Species Society

[www.socalorchidspecies.com](http://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)

Volume 38 Issue 9

September 2015

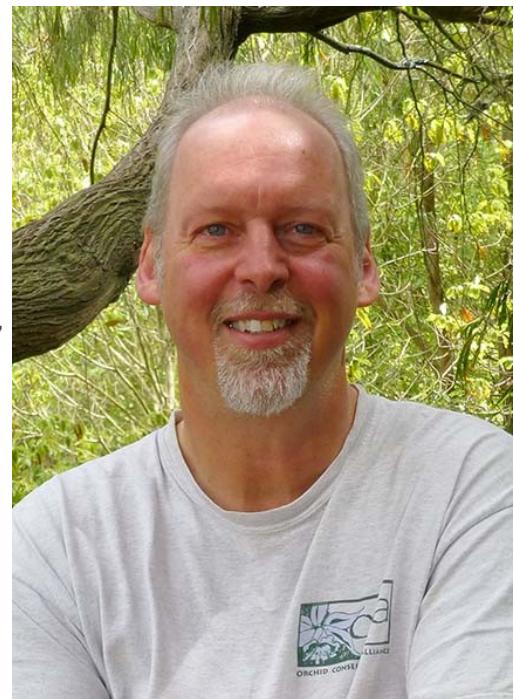
**September 13, 2015**

## Botanizing in Southern Ecuador

### Ron Parsons

Ron Parsons loves to travel, photograph orchids and other wildflowers *in situ*, visit botanical gardens and personal collections almost more than anything else. His talk this month is on his first trip to South America, an Ecuadorean orchid adventure with *Ecuagenera*, consisting of the guide Gilberto Merino, Mary Gerritsen, Laurent Minet (from Belgium), Peter Hottewitzsch (from Germany) and Ron. They traveled through quite a bit of southern Ecuador to such beautiful and orchid-rich areas as the Cordillera del Condor, Cajas National Park, Podocarpus National Park, etc where approximately 125 species of orchids were seen in bloom. This talk features the highlights of this wonderful trip.

Ron has been growing orchids for going on 40 years and has been interested in and has grown species orchids for most of that time. He loves to photograph orchids and other flowers whenever he can, whether it be in collections or trips to see them in nature. He has approximately 40,000 digital images, most of which are orchids, and has a slide library of flower photographs that exceeds 100,000 images. He has about 2500 published photos that have appeared in magazines, periodicals, journals, and books. He was co-authored three books, all with Mary Gerritsen. The first two are called *Masdevallias, Gems of the Orchid World* and *Calochortus, Mariposa Lilies and their Relatives*, and a third book has just been published in January of 2014, a two-volume set called *A Compendium of Miniature Orchid Species*. The most recent book has nearly 1200 pages, 1800 photographs, and features more than 500 species.



## Speaker's Choice

August speaker Bandon Tam selected *Catasetum expansum*, grown by Roberta Fox, as his Speaker's Choice. Roberta grows this in the greenhouse. From about mid-December (or sooner if the plant shows signs of dormancy) watering is reduced and then stopped. It is not resumed in the spring until the new growth is several inches tall and roots are well established. Since it isn't possible to see how long the new roots actually are (they are in the media, after all) she waits until the second flush of roots appears and that batch of roots is at least 1/2 inch to an inch. Then, both water and fertilizer are applied copiously all summer. This inflorescence contains male flowers, which are the attractive ones that define the species. However, in the past, this same plant has produced female flowers (even on the same inflorescence as males). Fred Clarke (who probably knows as much about cultivating *Catasetinae* as anybody on the planet) doesn't know exactly what triggers one gender or the other. In general, female flowers do tend to occur on the strongest, healthiest plants, since they have to carry the pod. But there is no "magic formula" for producing one or the other. (While the males are showier, obviously a breeder needs to get some females as well to produce seeds)



*Catasetum expansum*



Male



Female



Male and female on same inflorescence

It is fun to touch the "trigger" and shoot the pollinia across the room. However, the flowers, which otherwise last a week or two, fade within a couple of days, since they are no longer fertile. So don't do this to somebody else's plant unless invited to do so. (These are a challenge to transport to meetings, since the vibration of the car tends to fire the pollinia, so a plant is likely to be presentable only once for a given blooming.)

*Catasetum expansum* is native to western Ecuador in dry inland forests at elevations below 2150 ft (650 m). Heavy rain occurs for a few months in summer, then there is very little moisture. Even during dormancy, night temperatures do not go below about 50 deg. F., however.

## From the Member's Corner

We had 2 guests, who brought a *Phalaenopsis* for a critique, had a great time and made a donation for the help with their orchid. Say hello to Polly and John Kawcynski from Mission Viejo. At the September meeting, there will be a very important Board meeting regarding the auction; please be sure to attend.

*Edie Gulrich, Membership Secretary*

## President's Message

Hello everyone,

I've just returned from a trip to the eastern Sierras with my wife and our two sons. It was a wonderful week of fishing, hiking, and enjoying the beautiful scenery and fresh mountain air! We even had a late night visit from a mother bear and her three cubs who raided the trash can outside our cabin – what a mess!

The September meeting will be our last before the October auction. The auction is our main source of funds for the coming year, and we will need your help to make it a

success. Please consider volunteering your time. Sign-up sheets will be available at the meeting. We are also in need of donated plants. Edie will have pre-registration sheets with itemized numbers so all data can be entered prior to auction day.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting!

*Darrell Lovell, President*

## Editor's Potting Bench

The Events Calendar is very full, in anticipation of the fall show season. There are lots of opportunities for you to add to your collection. Fascination of Orchids will be at South Coast Plaza Village Sept 26-27, and there are several international species vendors. The full vendor list is on the show website <http://ocorchidshow.com>. If there is something special that you want from any of them, let them know and they'll be happy to bring it for pickup at the show if it's available. (Ecuagenera has sent us a complete list of available plants; there is a link to it on the show website.) Note that especially for the international vendors, you need to get your pre-orders placed within the first week or so of September, to allow them time to obtain the import documents and pack the plants for shipping. Even for the US vendors you should get your order placed at least a week before the show.

As I write this, it is still hot and humid. Most of the orchids are quite happy, especially with the humidity. It probably reminds them of "home". As long as the nights stay warm (they haven't been much below 68 deg. F since mid-June) the most effective watering is done in the evening, giving the plants all night to hydrate themselves before the heat of the day. After all, in the tropics, rain is most frequent in the afternoon and evening. You may also water during the day to cool the orchids, but the late watering is the most effective. However, we are approaching the autumn evening cooldown. AccuWeather (which I have found to be pretty good) shows some nights going to the low 60's in the second week of September. Then, watering should be shifted to the morning (the earlier the better).

There's always something blooming at my house (the re-

sult of many, and varied, plants) but much of the excitement comes in watching buds and spikes develop, that will produce a spectacular display starting in a month or six weeks. There is a forest of *Laelia anceps* spikes—I expect "action" by early October.

I am excited to see a very good blooming of *Habenaria medusa*. This is now the third year, so I guess that I'm doing something right. It's always a leap of faith with these terrestrials that go completely dormant for much of the year. They die back to what looks like an empty pot. They want some humidity, but no real moisture until around April. While they are in the process of going dormant they are forming the



*Habenaria medusa*

See: Editor's Potting Bench, Page 4

### Editor's Potting Bench, from Page 3

tuber for next season so you don't want to be too quick to stop watering (but water lightly or it will rot). In the winter in nature there is some humidity, so I give a very light watering about once a month to keep the tuber from dessicating. Then, if it hasn't started to show a sprout by about mid April, I'll start watering lightly until it wakes up. With luck, then, I get the reward of another appearance of a spectacular bloom. So far, this one has continued to reward me for several years. However, I have experienced a "pot of dirt" as a gift for my care from others in this group.

*Spathoglottis gracilis* is a consistent bloomer this time of year. Thank you to Richard Hess! It is definitely a greenhouse baby, growing happily in sphagnum moss. The 30" spikes make it a challenge to transport, so it doesn't make it to meetings often, but it is wonderful in the house. Individual flowers don't last all that long, but it keeps producing buds and new flowers over about two months. The color is pure sunshine.



*Spathoglottis gracilis*

My champion "never getting to a meeting" orchid is in bloom again. *Sobralia caloglossa* blooms about three times a year, but I think this blooming is the best yet. Actually, it is now only about 10 ft. tall... the 15ft. canes died back, as old *Sobralia* canes do. However, it produces about two new canes a year, and they start blooming when they are only about 6-7 ft., so now there is a

nice "bush" of flowers each time that it blooms. It gets more light than I think it got in its "youth" since Andy has his *Sobralias* in an area with shade cloth high enough to accommodate the big ones, and mine is in the open, getting some shade from surrounding trees, but still very bright., especially at mid-day. That may help it to bloom at a height where it is easier to appreciate the flowers.



*Sobralia caloglossa*

Speaking of *Sobralias*, I was excited to finally get a flower from *Sobralia violacea* after nurturing it for about four years. *Sobralias* really don't like their roots disturbed, hate to dry out, and don't take kindly to the bare-rooting process that they have to endure for import. Andy Phillips taught me to get them established in pure sphagnum moss in the minimum pot size. Once they put out new growth, they can be moved to a small-bark medium in a pot big enough to grow in.

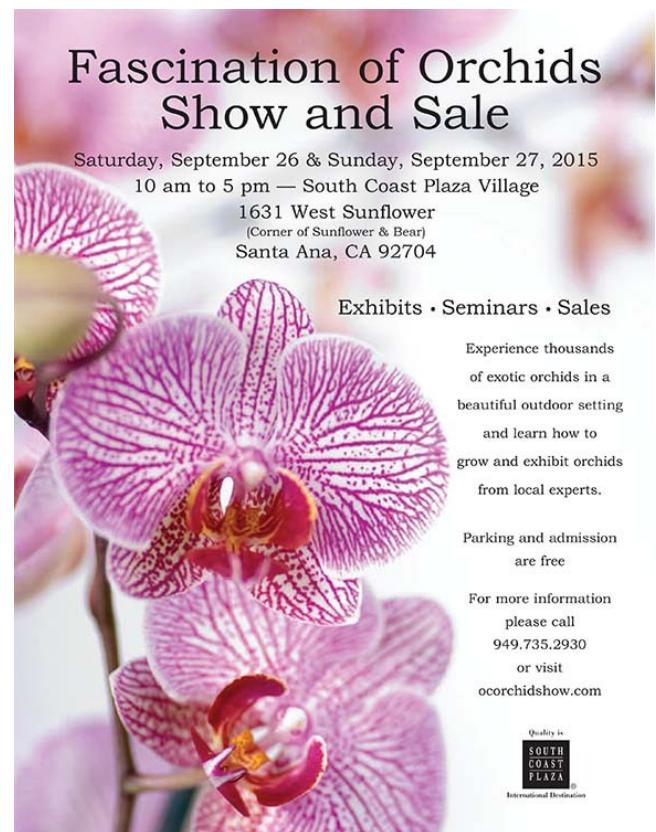


*Sobralia violacea*

Roberta Fox, Editor

## Calendar of Events \* See flyer at [www.socalorchidspecies.com](http://www.socalorchidspecies.com), select the Events link

- **South Bay Orchid Society Show and Sale**  
September 19-20; Sales Sat. 9-5, Sun 9-4, Show Sat 11-5 and Sun 9-4  
South Coast Botanic Garden, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes  
Admission \$9 Adults, \$6 Seniors, Free parking  
Info: [www.southbayorchidsociety.com](http://www.southbayorchidsociety.com)
- **Fascination of Orchids International Show and Sale\***  
September 26-27, 2015, 10 AM–5 PM  
South Coast Plaza Village, 1631 W Sunflower, Santa Ana (Corner of Sunflower and Bear)  
Info: [www.ocorchidshow.com](http://www.ocorchidshow.com)
- **Andy's Orchids Open House**  
October 2-4, 2015 10 AM–4 PM  
734 Ocean View Ave, Encinitas  
Info: [www.andysorchids.com](http://www.andysorchids.com)
- **San Diego International Orchid Fair**  
October 3-4; Sat 9-5, Sun 9-4  
San Diego Botanic Garden,  
230 Quail Gardens Dr., Encinitas  
Info: <http://www.sdbgarden.org/orchid.htm>
- **The Huntington Botanical Gardens First Annual International Orchid Show and Sale\***  
October 16-18; Fri. Noon-4:30, Sat. and Sun. 10:30-4:30  
The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino  
Info: [Huntington.org/OrchidShow](http://Huntington.org/OrchidShow)
- **Santa Barbara Orchid Estate Fall Open House**  
November 7-8; Sat. 8-5, Sun. 9-4  
1250 Orchid Dr., Santa Barbara  
Info: [www.sborchid.com](http://www.sborchid.com) or (800) 553-3387
- **Cal Orchid Fall Open House**  
November 7-8; 9-4 both days  
1251 Orchid Dr., Santa Barbara  
Info: [www.calorchid.com](http://www.calorchid.com) or (805) 967-1312



**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.**

Andy's Orchids Contact: Andy & Harry Phillips 760-436-4235, <a href="mailto:info@andysorchids.com">info@andysorchids.com</a> <a href="http://www.andysorchids.com">www.andysorchids.com</a>	Asbell Orchids Contact: Bob & Dan Asbell 805-550-5484	Blossom Supplies Contact: Gordon Hong 626-975-5293, <a href="mailto:blossomplanting@aol.com">blossomplanting@aol.com</a> <a href="http://www.blossomproducts.com">www.blossomproducts.com</a>
Calavo Gardens Orchids Contact: Ben & Suzy Machado 619-660-9810, <a href="mailto:BMACH16814@aol.com">BMACH16814@aol.com</a>	Cal-Orchid Contact: James Rose 805-967-1312, <a href="mailto:calorchid@cox.net">calorchid@cox.net</a> <a href="http://www.calorchid.com">www.calorchid.com</a>	Casa de las Orquideas Contact: Nancy Batchman 858-755-7572, <a href="mailto:casa@orquideas.com">casa@orquideas.com</a> <a href="http://www.orquideas.com">www.orquideas.com</a>
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Lico Orchids Contact: Lisa Humphries & Nico Goossens 760-942-4143, <a href="mailto:licoorchid@aol.com">licoorchid@aol.com</a>	Mariposa Garden Contact: Ron Hill 562-920-5588, <a href="http://www.mariposagarden.com">www.mariposagarden.com</a>	Mr. Fertilizer Contact: Don Knipp 949 -548-2678,
Orchid Design Contact: Angelic Nguyen 408-947-0486 <a href="mailto:angelic@orchidesign.com">angelic@orchidesign.com</a> <a href="http://www.orchidesign.com">www.orchidesign.com</a>	Orchids of Los Osos Contact: Michael Glikbarg (805) 528-0181, <a href="mailto:orchidland@aol.com">orchidland@aol.com</a> <a href="http://www.orchidsoflososos.com">www.orchidsoflososos.com</a>	OrchidWiz 720-524-3774 <a href="mailto:support@orchidwiz.com">support@orchidwiz.com</a> <a href="http://www.orchidwiz.com">www.orchidwiz.com</a>
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rePotme.com Orchid Mixes and Supplies 301-315-2344, <a href="mailto:customer_service@repotme.com">customer_service@repotme.com</a> <a href="http://www.repotme.com">www.repotme.com</a>	Santa Barbara Orchid Estate Contact: Alice & Parry Gripp 800-553-3387, <a href="mailto:sboe@sborchid.com">sboe@sborchid.com</a> <a href="http://www.sborchid.com">www.sborchid.com</a>	Seed Engei Contact: Satomi Kasahara , <a href="mailto:seed_engei@yahoo.com">seed_engei@yahoo.com</a>
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