

# NEWSLETTER



**Editor's Note:** The newsletter will be distributed electronically to all members for whom we have an email address. If you wish to switch from paper to electronic delivery, please notify me at [robert.lucas@usask.ca](mailto:robert.lucas@usask.ca).

## Future Meeting Dates:

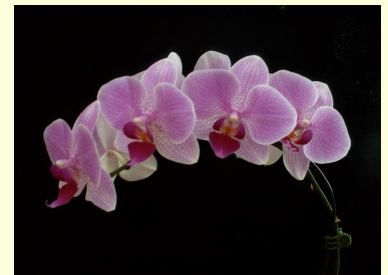
November 25, 2012	January 27, 2013	February 17, 2013
March 17, 2013	April 28, 2013	May 26, 2013

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<b>Speakers:</b>	Don Keith
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<b>Mail Address:</b>	SOS, Box 411 Saskatoon, SK S7K 3L3
<b>Web Address:</b>	<a href="http://www.saskorchids.com">www.saskorchids.com</a>

## October Meeting

The October general meeting of the Society will be held on **Oct. 28, 2012** at John Dolan School, commencing at 1:30 p.m. Ben Rostron, an AOS judge from Edmonton, will give a presentation on AOS judging.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The October meeting will feature a visit by Ben Rostron from Edmonton. Some of you may remember Ben's very informative presentation on Phal species the last time he visited the Society. He will talk on AOS judging. **Since he will not be bringing plants for sale, you are encouraged to bring plants to sell at the October meeting.**

If you did not partake of the incentive to renew your membership for 2012-13 in the Spring, you should do so at the October meeting. The cost is \$25.00 for a single and \$30.00 for a family membership. A new form (available from Cheryl G.) must be completed before purchase.

The October meeting will have a raffle of plants donated by Safeway. Be sure to purchase your tickets from Tracey or Jan at the Library table, \$1 for one, \$2 for three.

If you borrowed items from the Library for use over the summer, please please return them at the October meeting in order for others to have an opportunity to access them.

### Meeting Agenda

Announcements

Problem Corner

Show and Tell

Coffee/Supplies

Ben Rostron Presentation

Plant Raffle

Plant Sale

Adjournment



Phal Bedford Golden Victory

## MAY 27 MINUTES

### Announcements

Cal opened the meeting by extending a welcome to returning members, new members and guests. A special thanks is extended to Gabriele Brumeister, Lynn Campbell and Jack and Alice Dzus for bringing today's treats.

Gordon Heaps will give a talk today on his breeding program with miniature cattleyas. He and his wife, Janet, will also be selling plants.

Raffle tickets for plants donated by Safeway at Circle Park Mall are available at the library table.

Membership renewals for 2012-13 are available this month and next month. The cost is \$25.00 for a single and \$30.00 for a family membership.

The resource table has a new order of pots.

AOS and Orchid Digest magazines are available at the library, as well as other resources including light meters.

A plant order will be placed for H & R. The deadline for orders is on Friday of next week. The minimum for a group order is \$500. Problem corner

1. A Phalaenopsis purchased at Gardenscape had its spike trimmed off after blooming – was the spike trimmed in the wrong place? Is the plant OK? Response: Plants may rebloom from the same spike, though spike may also die off. The plant appears healthy, it has a new leaf coming. To bloom again it needs a temperature drop at night.

2. A Ludisia discolor grown under filtered light has lost leaves; it was repotted and went outside and sprouted leaves. What caused the initial leaf drop? Response: Generally, many orchid problems arise with overwatering. In the case of Ludisia, successful growing has occurred in a terrarium to increase humidity. It was noted that it is a terrestrial species. Cal will look up the culture on OrchidWiz during the break.

3. There is a keiki on a mini Phal and it has roots. When should it be potted? Response: The keiki can be removed and replanted at any time but it is best to wait until there are about 6 inches of roots. One can leave it as is if desired and it may even bloom.

4. A Dendrobium sent off a spike from the base of a pseudobulb/stem. It now appears to be a keiki. What should I do? Response: Keiki growth is likely due to overwatering as Dendrobiums need to dry out. Try cooling it off to trigger blooming.

5. A Cymbidium has the tips of its leaves turning black. It has now been moved from under lights. What causes this discoloring? Response: Generally Cymbidiums do not like to be divided. Leaf blackening could indicate high salt buildup due to over fertilization or

lack of flushing. Plants should be watered occasionally without fertilizer to avoid salt build-up.

**Show and Tell**

Plants were shown by Pat Randall, Cody Hamilton, Tracey Thue, Don Keith, Al Hartridge, Sherida Gregoire, Heather Adamson, Cheryl Adamson, Cal Carter and Bob Lucas.

**Heaps' Presentation**

Gordon Heaps gave an inform-

ative and comprehensive powerpoint presentation on the culture of mini cattleyas in the home environment . His hands-on approach included a demonstration of dividing and repotting plants, and examples of plants with healthy root growth. Credit was given to Janet Heaps for compiling the powerpoint presentation. Many photos were included of his hybridizing program with mini-catts.

**Plant Raffle**

There were many Phalaenopsis both blooming and past-blooming that were donated by Safeway.

**Plant sale**

Gordon Heaps brought an assorted collection of mini-cattleyas for sale, along with a few plants he obtained from Ecuagenera.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

**SOS SEPTEMBER SHOW AND TELL**



Onc. ornithorhynchum Exhibitor: Pat Randall



Sophronitis bicolor Exhibitor: Heather Anderson



Phal Rarashati Princess Exhibitor: Cody Hamilton



Vanda Pachora Delight AM/AOS Exhibitor: Al Hartridge





Rlc. Ojai 'Veste' Exhibitor: Sherida Gregoire



Paph. Winston Churchill Exhibitor: Cal Carter



Pleurothallis grobyi Exhibitor: Tracey Thue



Stanhopea florida Exhibitor: Don Keith

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### PHRAGMIPEDIUM KOVACHII HYBRIDS PART II BY GLEN DECKER, 2009

**Editor's Note:** Reprinted by permission from the Oct/Nov/Dec 2009 issue of Orchid Digest. Part I included photos of a number of new crosses made with kovachii. Others are to be found at the end of Part II.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. There is the yet to be registered hybrid of P. Bel Royal x kovachii, giving us an almost fluorescent pink color. There are many other new hybrids with mature plants waiting to bloom that you can look forward to seeing in the near future. P. Sunset Glow x kovachii should be

similar to P. Alfredo Manrique. Other hybrids are P. pearcei x kovachii, P. Don Wimber x kovachii and P. Jason Fischer x kovachii, which is one I can't wait to see. I am not sure where the Eric Young Orchid Foundation is with their phragmipedium breeding program when it comes to kovachii. However,

the EYOF has always been one of the leaders in this field and they have already registered two hybrids. We will just have to wait and see what they have in store for us. As for Alfredo, he tells me that he has remade P. Alfredo Manrique using different parents and it is presently growing in the lab. He also has made a handful of newer hybrids, crossing kovachii back onto P. Haley Decker, P. Suzanne Decker and P. Memoria Mariza Rolando with the first having active growth in the lab. H.P. Norton has also been busy working on a host of new things. He has remade many of the kovachii hybrids presently available using different parents, as well as many newer hybrids such as P. Tara x kovachii, P. Bouley Bay x kovachii, P. Fritz Schomburg x Prissy and P. Peruflora's Spirit x besseae to name a few.

Outside of the EYOF and a few breeders in Germany as well as Manrique and Arias of Peru, I would expect to see new kovachii hybrids coming from right here in our own backyard, from a few of our own phragmipedium breeders such as H.P. Norton, Jerry Fischer, Bill Goldner and Chuck Ackers. I will also be interested to see if Terry Root might have something in the works for us. What does the future have in store for kovachii? Who knows, but it is sure to be exciting!

The cultural requirement for growing these new hybrids seems to be controversial, making hobbyists feel as if they are too difficult to grow. In reality, they are no different from growing any other phragmipedium hybrid presently in your collection. I think that all the information out there on growing the species has unnecessarily scared off many hobbyists from trying these new and wonderful hybrids. Below is some general cultural information on how I grow my phragmipediums as well as my kovachii hybrids. I'll start with my potting mix which is really only a basic bark mix. Keep in mind that, at least for me, my mix usually changes slightly every year depending on the quality of the bark, and what I find after inspecting the roots from the previous repotting. If I find that there are too many dead roots in the pot, I have to ask myself why. Was it because the plant was overdue to be repotted compromising the air circulation within the pot, or was it due to not getting enough water? Since I do not sit my plants in water, they sometimes have a tendency to dry out a little more than I would like,

so I add more fine bark to my mix to retain more moisture for a longer period of time.

- 7 parts medium grade fir bark
- 11 parts seedling or fine grade fir bark
- 3 parts horticultural charcoal
- 4 parts sponge rock or large perlite
- 1 part calcium chips or cracked oyster shells (optional)
- 1/8 part pelletized limestone (optional)
- 1/8 part bone meal (optional)

For seedlings, I would swap out the medium grade fir bark and replace it with fine grade fir bark. Of course, this is a potting mix that works well for me, but it may need to be tweaked for your growing environment. Now, don't get all crazy about finding calcium chips or cracked oyster shell. If you are fortunate enough to live in a farming community, then it's real easy. Any store that sells animal feed will carry one or both of these products. It's inexpensive, I think it costs around \$9.00 for a 50 pound bag ... yes, 50 pound bag ... share it with your friends. However, I use it for all my paphiopedilums and phragmipediums. Both of these products are used as poultry feed supplement for egg producing chickens to help strengthen their shells. I would also have to assume that any large specialty bird store or pet store would carry it as well to feed nesting birds of all types. As for pelletized limestone and bone meal, both can be found in your local hardware store or garden center, but none of these products are necessary to successfully grow your phragmipediums.

Using higher quality waters, such as RO or rain water will be an advantage when growing the species, however it is not as important when we are talking about the hybrids. You should be able to get away with using all types of water, just watching your salt levels. Water softeners are a no-no, since they use salts to accomplish their function. As with all phragmipediums, we want to keep them moist to almost wet at all times.

Fertilizing, again as with all phragmipediums, they tend to be heavier feeders, however young plants should be grown with lighter dosages. I won't recommend a percentage or at what rate, since this should be grown with lighter dosages. I won't



recommend a percentage or at what rate, since this is something that is clearly defined by how you grow and your own growing conditions. Along with regular feeding, I will occasionally supplement with calcium nitrate as well as magnesium sulfate, which is actually Epsom salts... yes, I know I said to watch your salts, but all fertilizers contain salts. During the summer months, I may also supplement with fish emulsion and/or kelp extract as well. Both are nitrogen based foliar feeds which I feel benefit the plants during the growing months. As with all fertilizers, following the manufactures recommended dosages is a good start, however if they give you a once a month rate, break it down and do it weekly.

Windowsill and under light growers, I would recommend cutting the rate in half for starters, since your conditions can sometimes be less than optimum. Of course, the full potential of *kovachii* hybrids is yet to be seen and the best, I'm sure, is to come. So far most of my expectations have been met with average size plants, a more compact inflorescence with larger flowers and good color. I feel the second generation hybrids will truly be the test of its potential. For now, it's still a waiting game, waiting for the next wave of hybrids to bloom and shine. *Phragmipedium kovachii* has probably been the most important and exciting find in orchids in the past 100 years, and it could very well be that for the next 100 years to come.✿

#### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Alfredo Manrique, Manolo Arias and H.P. Norton for all their help with their

information on many of these hybrids along with the use of their photos, which is greatly appreciated.

I would also like to thank Allen Black, Steve Helbling, Kathleen Harvey, and all the growers and photographers who have contributed to this article in one way or another.

#### About the Author

Glen Decker began growing orchids at the age of 15 and holds the degree of Associate in Applied Science in Ornamental Horticulture. Glen is presently the owner of Piping Rock Orchids in Galway, New York. He presently serves as a director of the Orchid Digest Corporation and was the previous chair of the American Orchid Society's Publications Committee and is still a member of the committee today. Glen has won numerous AOS awards, including the Butterworth Prize, Nax Trophy, WW Wilson Award and the Carlyle A. Luer Award. He has appeared in Martha Stewart's Better Living Magazine and in the PBS TV special "Orchid Delirium". He rewrote the Slipper section of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's "The Best Orchids for Indoors" and was the technical editor for the book, "Orchids for Dummies".



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#### *Phragmipedium Peruflora's Angel* (*richterii* x *kovachii*) 7/19/2007 – Peruflora

This cross was a pleasant surprise. Flowers exhibiting a culmination of colors from orange-red to lavender-purple with some green-yellow tones exhibited in the petals have been seen in the handful of plants to date. They have good size flowers, averaging 4-3/8" (11.1 cm) in natural spread on a tall inflorescence. I would expect that hybrids such as *P. kovachii* x *P. pearcei* or *P. kovachii* x *P. hirtzii* to be very similar to this one. Even though this group of hybrids lack form, they make up for it in charm. We should see compact growing plants with good sized flowers.



*Phragmipedium*  
*Peruflora's Angel*

*Phragmipedium Suzanne Decker*  
(*kovachii* x Cape Sunset)

6/7/2007 – Piping Rock Orchids / Alfredo Manrique

*Phragmipedium Suzanne Decker* is an absolute favorite of mine, but not everyone likes pink flowers. I do and this one is extraordinary. Considering that I had already named the first hybrid after my daughter, it was only fair to name this one for my wife. Using a second generation besseae hybrid *P. Cape Sunset* (Eric Young x *schlimii*) shows you just how dominate *P. schlimii* color is in its hybrids. When looking at this flower, I definitely see it as *P. Cape Sunset* on steroids. This hybrid has been the strongest grower of them all, with rich pink flowers, blushed white in the center of the petals, and a natural spread of 6" (15.2 cm) to 7" (17.8 cm). Of all the hybrids to bloom so far, this one is the most consistent when it comes to shape, size and color of the flowers. A few of the plants have been so robust that they already have eight growths in a pot.

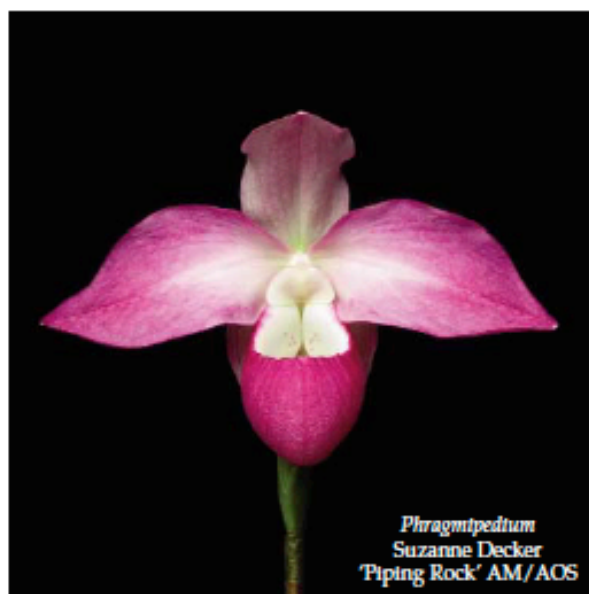


*Phragmipedium*  
Suzanne Decker

©Glen F. Decker



*Phragmipedium*  
Suzanne Decker



*Phragmipedium*  
Suzanne Decker  
'Piping Rock' AM/AOS

©Greg Allikas

*Phragmipedium Peruflora's Cirila Alca*  
(*kovachii* x *dalessandroi*)

6/11/2007 – Peruflora

It's not uncommon to see a plant of *P. dalessandroi* holding eight to ten flowers on a single, branching inflorescence, which I would expect to see come through in this hybrid once larger, more mature plants begin to flower. The downside to *P. dalessandroi* is that it gives you less shapely flowers with narrower petals, so it's a trade off of shape versus flower count. Manolo tells me that the average natural spread of this hybrid is around 4-3/4" (12.1 cm), with colors ranging from light pink to deep purples. Like many *phragmipediums* blooming for the first time, they can flower on relatively small plants. Manolo named the plant in honor of Cirila Alca who helped raise and educate him helped his parents raise and educate him and his brother and sister while their parents were working. Unfortunately, lost her battle to cancer in 1994.



*Phragmipedium*  
Peruflora's Cirila Alca

©Peruflora

*Phragmipedium* Peruflora's Spirit*(kovachii* x Eric Young)

6/7/2007 – Peruflora

*Phragmipedium* Peruflora's Spirit is the first of many *kovachii* hybrids that Peruflora has produced and registered. I have not seen this hybrid in person, but looking at the photos it appears to be a very large *P. Eric Young* (*longifolium* x *besseae*). Again, H.P. was fortunate enough to bloom a few of these and he tells me that the flowers can be 6-1/4" (15.9 cm) to 7" (17.8 cm) in natural spread. However, Manolo from Peruflora tells me that the ones flowering in Peru have been a bit smaller, averaging around 5-1/8" (13 cm). The difference in size could strictly be cultural, not saying that one grower is better than the other, but referring to geographical differences in temperature, light and water qualities. I would have to assume that these must be very vigorous growers due to the influence of *P. Eric Young*.

*Phragmipedium*  
Peruflora's Spirit

©H.P. Norton

*Phragmipedium*  
Peruflora's Spirit

©H.P. Norton

*Phragmipedium*  
Peruflora's Spirit

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*Phragmipedium*  
Peruflora's Cirila Alca

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