

# NROS News

NOVEMBER 2009

Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>., 2009

Regular Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Holy Rosary Church Hall  
35 Queen Street  
Thorold

## PROGRAMS

“TRIVIA” NIGHT



## EXECUTIVE 2009-2010

President . . . . .	Colin Burns . . . . .	<a href="mailto:burnscolin@hotmail.com">burnscolin@hotmail.com</a> . . . . .	905-684-9705
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Membership . . . . .	Aimee Roger . . . . .		905-685-8159
Show Chairperson . . . . .	Nancy Vandenberg . . . . .		905-384-2381
Librarian . . . . .	George Streeter . . . . .		905-682-7792
Show Table . . . . .	Simon Holierhoek . . . . .		905-894-2135
Hospitality . . . . .	Barbara Berry . . . . .		905-227-4307
Telephone . . . . .	Justin Dunning . . . . .		289-686-1134
AOS/COC Rep. . . . .	Rick Rempel . . . . .		905-734-1588
Webmaster/Program Co-ordinator . . . . .	Warren Steele . . . . .		

WEB SITE ADDRESS: [www.niagaraorchidsociety.org](http://www.niagaraorchidsociety.org)

## OCTOBER SHOW TABLE

### Class 1 Cattleya Alliance

Bc. Mrs. Jack Leeman	S. Dietsch	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Potinara Haw Yuan Glory	P. Hinman	2 <sup>nd</sup> .
Cattleya Bess Truman	S. Dietsch	3 <sup>rd</sup> .
Slc. Wendy's Valentine 'June' AM/AOS	N. Vandenberg	
Cattleya bowringiana	S. Dietsch	
Blc. Ports of Paradise		
'Green Ching Hua' AM/AOS	N. Vandenberg	
Cattleya Edith B. Yeakel	M. Booy	
Blc. Ports of Paradise		
'Green Ching Hua' AM/AOS	S. Dietsch	

### Class 2 Paphiopedilum

Paphiopedilum Julius "Beth"	M. Havinga	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Paphiopedilum spicerianum	S. Dietsch	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Paph. Shireen	M. Havinga	2 <sup>nd</sup> .
Paph. Justa Doll	B. Smeaton	2 <sup>nd</sup> .
Paph. henryanum	P. Hinman	3 <sup>rd</sup> .
Paph. Lunacy	P. Hinman	3 <sup>rd</sup> .
Paph. Black Diamond	B. Smeaton	
Paph. St. Swithin	B. Smeaton	
Paph. charlesworthii	W. Muste	
Paph. Flame Arrow	S. Dietsch	
Paph. Goultianum	M. Havinga	
Paph. Pinocchio x Paph. bellatulum	D. Culp	

### Class 4 Oncidium Alliance

***Oncidium Sharry Baby	S. Holierhoek	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Mtssa. Pelican Lake 'Everglades' AM/AOS	S. Holierhoek	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Wilsonara Tigersetta 'Wyld Court' AM/AOS/RHS	N. Vandenberg	2 <sup>nd</sup> .

### Class 7 All Others

Bulbophyllum sicyobulbon	L. & J. Stewart	1 <sup>st</sup> .
Coelogyne barbata	P. Hinman	2 <sup>nd</sup> .
Coelogyne massangeana	P. Hinman	2 <sup>nd</sup> .

### Class 8 Specimen Plants

Cattleya ????	S. Holierhoek	
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\*\*\*\*\*PLANT OF THE MONTH

## **BULLETIN BOARD**

### **Meeting**

Well, since the last one went so well and everyone really enjoyed it, we are going to have another one!! Yes, our November meeting is "Trivia Night"!! We will be doing the same - dividing people into groups and see which group knows the most orchid facts. There will be prizes for the winners. So come out next Wednesday with all that orchid knowledge and see if you can beat some of your fellow members at Trivia Night!!

### **NROS Show**

The following is an update from our Show Chair...

As the show chair I feel responsible to make the show a success, but our show is definitely a group effort! I just want to thank everyone who has volunteered to come and help during the show, as well as those who have offered to make snacks for the other volunteers. Member participation makes all the difference! We still need more volunteers on Sunday for the front desk and Membership table. Please call me at 905-384-2381 if you can spare a few hours. When you come in for your volunteer time, please remember to pick up your name tag. It will be at the front desk. Remember that volunteers get free admission into the show. I would also like to remind everyone to bring their plants (for our display) on Friday before 6 p.m. Well that's it. Hope everyone has a good time. See you at our show.

Nancy

### **Membership**

Again, I would like to remind

everyone that membership fees are due. If you pay your \$20.00 fee by the end of November, your name goes into a draw for a free orchid. The lucky winner's name will be drawn at the Christmas Party in December. Please see Aimee Roger at the meeting or send your cheque to:

Aimee Roger  
21 Hillcrest Avenue  
St. Catharines L2R 4Y2

### **Christmas Party**

Also, this is a reminder to members that the December meeting will be our annual Christmas Party. The date is December 9<sup>th</sup>. this year. There will be a sign-up sheet at the November meeting for what type of pot luck meal you would like to bring. The Society will supply paper plates, but if you prefer china, you may bring your own plates and utensils.

### **Group Order**

As discussed at the October meeting, a group order to purchase orchids is being arranged. Orders will be taken up to the January 2010 meeting with delivery sometime in March or April of 2010. Payment in full must accompany all orders. Discounts and shipping charges will be applied after the order is received. Plant listings will be available at each meeting until December 2009. If you would like to check on updated listings the website is:

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

For more information, please contact Justin Dunning at

[this.is.justin@hotmail.com](mailto:this.is.justin@hotmail.com)

### Goodies

This is a reminder for Astrid Fortin and Aimee Roger that they are signed up to bring the goodies for our coffee for the November meeting. Thanks, Ladies!

### For Sale

A set of "Flora-Lights" - 3-tier; 6 light tubes in all. Excellent condition. \$200.00 Please call Christel Fuerniss 905-892-1727.

The following article is taken from the Native Plant Society of British Columbia newsletter "Menziesia". They have an interesting web site if anyone would like to check it out.... There is also a link to the newsletter and the earlier issues are on-line if you wish to read them.

<http://www.npsbc.org>

### THE PHANTOM ORCHID IN CANADA



Rare saprophyte maintains only a toehold in Canada  
By Brian Klinkenberg

This year, following our preparation of an update status report, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife (COSEWIC) elevated the phantom orchid (*Cephalanthera austini*) to the status of a threatened species in Canada. This status is fitting for this elusive, and unique, orchid which has captured the interest of so many botanists and photographers, and which retains only a toehold of a presence in

British Columbia.

The phantom orchid was described and named nearly almost a century ago by Heinrich Gustav Reichenbach of Germany, and Dr. Asa Gray of the US. Almost totally white, it can grow to a robust height of 65 cm, although many plants are

smaller and somewhat weak looking. It is truly an apparition when first encountered, something elusive that you have stumbled upon in the woods. The smooth leafless stalk is clasped by white sheaths up to 10 cm long, and 5-20 yellow-throated flowers are noticeably aromatic. To cap off its ghostly appearance, the plant feels clammy and wax-like.

The Phantom is unique in several ways. Of the fifteen species which comprise the taxonomically primitive orchid genus *Cephalanthera*, this is the only one which occurs in North America. It is also the only truly saprophytic orchid species, requiring a symbiotic relationship with a subterranean mycorrhizal fungus for nutrients. And, as with many plant species which range along the Pacific coast down to California, the phantom orchid just makes it into the extreme southwest of British Columbia, where it occurs at the northern limit of its range. Here, a total of eight extant and two historical populations are known from three locales: the Saanich Peninsula, Saltspring Island, and the Chilliwack area, on both private lands and in provincial parks and ecological reserves.

Of the eight extant populations, only three appear to regularly produce flowering stems and, in those, seed set may be a rare occurrence. Observers such as Adolph Ceska have speculated that this low level of seed set might be related to a lack of pollinators resulting from the orchid's occurrence here at the northern limit of its range. Because no consistent long-term monitoring has been carried out, we cannot determine if the low number of flowering records represents declining populations, dormant populations or simply a lack of monitoring, and we cannot determine why so few seeds are produced.

One of the confounding factors in attempting to develop an understanding of this orchid is that associated subcanopy species can vary from site to site. Though it shows a preference for coniferous forest habitat, occurring on sites with little or no competition, and where the ground is covered only by needle litter, it also occurs on sites with extensive ground cover. In the Saanich Peninsula it shows a preference for sites with a limestone component, and this might be true in other sites. While factors which alter its preferred substrate (a loose humus layer), such as logging or fire, are reported as detrimental to the species, some observers have noted that disturbance may in fact be beneficial. In particular, one of the first observers of this species in British Columbia, Katherine Tye, noted that eliminating grazing from her orchid site resulted in a decline in numbers of flowering stems.

There are a number of factors which make this orchid biologically and ecologically interesting. In 1999, we discovered that it has a flowering season in BC which can range from early May to at least late July. We also observed, in two sites, that new flowering stems were appearing in mid-July adjacent to stems we had counted in late May and mid-June. In fact, in mid-July, new stems were just unfolding. This new information on the length and variability of the flowering season for this plant means that previous counts of flowering stems were likely low, and might explain the reports of dormancy by some authors. In addition, two US researchers, Taylor and Bruns, have now observed that the *Cephalanthera austini* "associates exclusively with fungi of the Thelephoraceae over the entire range sampled....covering essentially the entire range of this orchid." They

**consider this the first proof of ectomycorrhizal epiparasitism in nature by an orchid. This finding may explain why attempts at cultivating the orchid have continued to be unsuccessful.**

**At present, the phantom orchid receives some protection by virtue of its occurrence in two provincial parks, in one ecological reserve and on crown land set aside specifically for it. Even in these sites, though, the plants are vulnerable to inadvertent disturbance, and to the effects of plant succession. Otherwise, it occurs on private properties where some owners have expressed strong interest in its protection. However, because we still know so little about this orchid, continuous monitoring is necessary to facilitate our understanding of its occurrence and its ecology. Careful observations, such as those made by field botanists such as Adolph and Oluna Ceska, and in the past by Katherine Tye, are no doubt important for its long-term survival, and for the eventual development of management plans where it occurs on public lands. In the meantime, the phantom orchid remains one of Canada's most elusive and rare species.**

**Brian Klinkenberg is Associate Professor of Geography and Director of the Spatial Data Lab, University of British Columbia.**