

news

Volume 12.1 - January 2000

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A NEW MILLENIUM

A New Millenium

Welcome to the first issue of a new year, a new century and a new millenium. Receipt of this issue is also proof that Y2K didn't disable my computer and the world didn't end.

President's Message

COC Annual Congress

Here we are in the depths of winter but my phals are all in spike and my paphs are blooming. When the great outdoors looks so cold and bleak, it is always great to go and fuss over the plants - to monitor the growth of each leaf, spike and bud, and to marvel over each new flower.. Spring is coming! And spring is the season of shows - when I look at catalogs and award quarterlies to see what's new, to build a shopping list of 'must have' plants. You can always tell the addicts (who, me?) - on opening day of a show they are first in line and go directly to the sales area for that special plant.

Orchid Conservation

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Upcoming Events

Except this year after almost 25 years of growing (and killing) orchids, I have come to a difficult conflict. Put succinctly - I want to travel. The house and plants tie me down making it difficult to get away for more than a couple of weeks at a time. I visited some friends in Florida that go there each year for the winter and I must say the weather and social activities are enticing. Why am I back here in the snow and cold?

So with great effort I have been selecting plants to sell. All that empty space that invited purchase of yet another plant is re-appearing. When to stop, I don't know yet. There are many favourites to keep and a few that are going to bloom for the first time 'any time now'.

How do others cope with this dilemma? Retirement brings the time to travel or to get away for the winter. Who takes care of the house and plants? Or do you give up both?

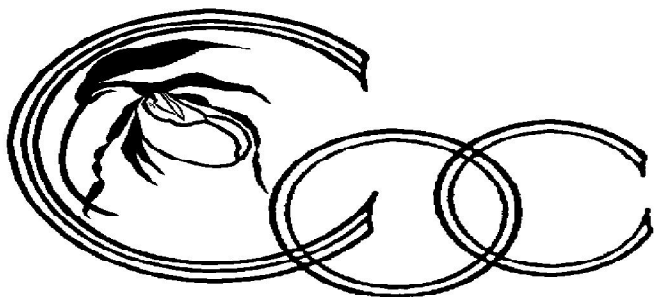
Jerry Bolce, Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A few months ago, the COC was contacted regarding an upcoming orchid-related article being planned for the December/January issue of the Canadian Gardening magazine. "Would we like to have the COC mentioned as a resource, and would I be willing to have my name, address, phone, fax and e-mail published too?" I agreed, and am pleased to report that since publication, we have had many requests for information from all parts of Canada. All but one of the more than a dozen requests came from individuals looking for a society to join! Most wanted to know about shows in their area and where they could find information about growing orchids. Enquiries came by telephone, fax and e-mail, from Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, all parts of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Some asked for literature and have been sent "Growing Your First Orchid", a COC publication produced a few years ago as well as club contacts. We clearly must be ready for opportunity when it knocks!

Orchid fragrance is a very hot topic indeed! The recently produced slide program on that topic has so far been shown in Kingston and Ottawa, ON, in Montreal, QC and in Halifax, NS. It is scheduled for Regina, SK in February and for Chicoutimi, QC in April. The latter delivery will be in French and will give us the opportunity to develop our slide program in French too.

Orchid growing may require some expertise but orchid fragrance appreciation requires only a good nose! Having a fragrant orchid exhibit at a show is clearly a crowd pleaser. I hope that clubs not yet featuring a fragrance section in their show, consider it. Remember, the plants do all the work producing the scent. All you have to do is arrange them in such a way that visitors can savour the spicy floral notes of our favourite blooms. Enjoy!



COC ANNUAL CONGRESS

LONDON ON, MARCH 3-5, 2000

This year's Congress is just over one month away. The London organizing committee is working hard to make your visit one to remember. The COC banquet will be held at the Riverview Restaurant which is adjacent to the Wonderland Garden show site. The auction will be in a room at the show site just prior to the banquet. The idea is to encourage people who may not be attending the banquet to attend the auction regardless. Moving to the dining area is then basically walking out a door - across a walkway and back in to the dinner area - it will be very convenient. On Saturday, after the speakers are done, LOS is planning to allow the COC executive and representatives to have some private time to view the show prior to the auction.

The auction promises to be excellent. Divisions of awarded plants, species, seedlings and flasks are welcomed. Remember, the auction not only is a COC-fund raiser but also an opportunity to purchase some interesting plants.

A shuttle bus will be available to transport attendees between the show location and the COC speaker location from 12:00 noon until 5:00 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday. For attendees with their own transportation, there is free parking available at both sites. The two locations are located about two city blocks apart.

Remember to check out the web site for up-to-the-minute details: <http://los.lon.imag.net/show.htm>

Delegate Registration

Fri. March 3 6:00-9:00 PM Wonderland Gardens site
Sat. March 4 8:00-10:00 AM Wonderland Gardens site
Sat. March 4 10:30-12:30 PM Civic Garden Centre site

The following speakers will be in attendance:

Saturday March 4, 2000:

12:30 - 1:30 Marilyn Light
TOPIC: Orchids that are "Forever Blooming"

2:00 - 3:00 Doug Kennedy
TOPIC: *Odontoglossum bicktoniense* to
Odonctodidium Cherry Fudge: Nature's pallet yields a masterpiece.

3:30 - 4:30 Norito Hasegawa
TOPIC: to be announced

Sunday March 5, 2000:

12:30 - 1:30 Mario Ferrusi
TOPIC: Masdevallias - species and award winning hybrids

2:00 - 3:00 To Be Announced

3:30 - 4:30 To Be Announced

The COC Annual General Meeting

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:00 am, Sunday, March 5, 2000. The show and the COC meeting/lecture site are on adjacent properties. The COC area is the upper site and the show site is the lower of the two. Unless the weather is unseasonably warm, walking from one site to the other will not be a good option as there is a fair slope to climb. The organizing committee plans to have shuttle service which will transport people between these two show site areas for both Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon to 5 pm. Expect more details when you pick up your package at the show site on Friday, March 3.

Agenda

Roll Call
Minutes of the 1999 AGM
Business Arising from the Minutes
New Business

Policy regarding plant sale during COC tours
Other

Elections
Adjournment

A meeting of the new executive planned after the AGM, time to be announced.

SHOULD THE COC HAVE A POLICY ON PLANT SALES FOR SPEAKER TOURS?

The COC has been asked to consider having a standard policy regarding plant sales. There presently is no standard policy regarding COC speakers bringing plants for sale on a speculative basis. Speakers/vendors can come from overseas, the continental USA, Hawaii, and Canada. Vendors coming from outside Canada usually offer

catalogues for pre-order but they are welcome to bring additional plants if they wish. It might be preferable for society members to have a broad choice at the time of the speaker visit but this is not always possible for a variety of reasons.

From a conservation viewpoint, plants which remain unsold and travel with the speaker from place to place could suffer from variable temperature, humidity and lack of sufficient light to remain in excellent condition and this we feel is an undesirable situation. The process of re-export is often awkward. Unsold stock in poor condition could present an economic loss to the vendor, a loss which they may not wish to sustain.

Any society wishing to take part in the COC speaker tour has been made aware of the necessity for pre-order if that is what applies to a particular case. Does the COC wish to have a standard policy?

This topic is on the agenda for debate during the AGM in London, March 5, 2000.

PROPOSED SLATE FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE COC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The COC Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following persons have agreed to let their names stand for election to the COC Board at the annual COC meeting during the London Orchid Society Show, March 5th, in London Ontario:

President: Lynne Cassidy, Surrey BC (Fraser Valley OS)

Vice President: Ingrid Ostrander, Brentwood BC (Victoria OS)

Secretary: Terry Kennedy, Gormley ON (Southern Ontario OS)

Treasurer (for re-election): Janette Richardson, Regina SK (Regina OS)

Each Canadian Orchid Society which is a paid up member of the COC is entitled to a vote. Be sure your Society sends a representative to this meeting to vote on its behalf.

Jeanette Arthurs
Past President
Chairman of the Nominating Committee

ORCHID CONSERVATION INTO THE NEXT MILLENIUM

Copyright Marilyn H.S. Light 1999

As presented on Dec. 8, 1999 at www.orchidsafari.org

THE SITUATION

THE PAST - 20,000 years before present

Ice ages are part of climatic trends that take place over hundreds of thousands of years, cycles that likely will continue through the next millenia. The last advance, called the Wisconsin glacier in North America because that is the state where glacial deposits were first studied, began about 85,000 years ago and lasted more than 60,000 years. It was the most recent in a series of glaciers originating in northern Canada whose ice advances radically altered our landscape. The land was scoured of topsoil, trees and herbs. Even the bare rock was scraped by boulders embedded in the ice as it moved inexorably over the terrain.

Glacial ice sheets were a mile or more thick such that the land was depressed below sea level. Such was the volume of ice that sea levels were lower than they are today and coastlines were altered. Once the weight of the ice disappeared, the land slowly rebounded but before that happened, waters occupied depressed areas. For example, one inland sea called the Champlain Sea covered an area of over 20,000 square miles in portions of Ontario, Quebec, New York and Vermont. Another smaller sea, Mer de Laflamme, surrounded the present day Lac St-Jean in Quebec.

After the Wisconsin glacier reached its maximum southernmost position about 20,000 years ago, it then began a slow retreat, pausing occasionally and dropping off piles or ridges of debris known as moraines. Glacial lakes and inland seas existed until about 8,000 years ago and as they retreated they left behind marine sediments (clays) and sandy beaches.

Despite all of the damage that was wrought by these natural forces, plants and animals did return to claim the land. It took a long time, of course, but fortunately there were refugia in a much wetter south where orchids still flourished. Winds blew seeds north and where the habitat was suitable, they established.

The Past 200 Years to the PRESENT

Over the past two centuries, humans have conquered the land and the air. Where there were once formidable natural barriers such as mountains, swamps and deserts, cars, trains, canals and airplanes have trivialized them, making virtually

all land available to human exploitation. As human numbers increase, so do the demands upon newly exploited land to produce food, support housing, transportation routes and industrial complexes including mines. The result is a fast-paced 'glaciation' such as plants and animals have never dealt with before. Can the land rebound from current levels of exploitation? What will remain after the 'glacier' has passed? What will it leave in its wake and where will the refugia be to re-populate the exploited and abandoned land?

FUTURE

As we practice conservation, each in our own way, we probably do so in the context of our lifetime and maybe that of our children or grandchildren. If we think in terms of a conservation plan for imminent glaciation, we can get an idea of potentially how far into the future we might have to plan for. Twenty thousand years is a very long Florida vacation! And yet, what we set in place now could very well be the foundation of a plan for many generations to come. Furthermore, there are an estimated 25,000 orchid species. Should we try to save them all and if not, which ones should we choose?

THE VARIABLES

We clearly have some very difficult challenges to deal with when working towards orchid conservation. We can control access to areas but we cannot control the climate or geologic forces. All we can do is plan for contingencies and deal with these as they happen. It may be that gene, seed and pollen banks will have to be as carefully situated as power plants, with back up generators to ensure power is available for freezers when there are blackouts.

We must also consider evolution. Species are not necessarily standing still. They are evolving. Conservation must allow for evolution and not be pre-occupied with only preserving the status quo.

The Action Plan recommendations published by the IUCN/SSC Orchid Specialist Group (OSG) in 1996 suggest both in situ and ex situ conservation of orchids and their habitats. Communication, education and regulation are seen as effective tools to achieve orchid conservation. In particular, they recommend that orchid societies should have an active role in conservation such as establishing a regional seed exchange.

The OSG Ex Situ Group, chaired by Phil Seaton, will be addressing seed and pollen storage. I hope that all seed

banks wherever they are located, will share knowledge and expertise to address major issues such as long term storage and the establishment of storage facilities for years to come. If you wish to contact Phil Seaton, his address is c/o Kidderminster College, Hoo Road, Kidderminster DY10 1LX United Kingdom.

Philip Seaton's e-mail is

<philip@seatonorchids.freeserve.co.uk>

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE GOALS

TIME CAPSULE APPROACH

Hind sight is a great teacher. On how many occasions have we admonished ourselves for not having foresight, for example, not jotting down Grandma's favorite recipe, the one she knew by heart, while she was still alive and able to recount it.

Orchid species are becoming extinct now. What they are and what we can learn from them will be lost unless we endeavour to preserve as much of the knowledge about them as possible. This includes the establishment of seed, pollen and gene banks.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPROACH - A horse race

Orchid species at risk of extinction are often the subject of intensive conservation efforts. There are many species in the lineup for project funding: which one is the best bet? One major challenge lies in putting all those precious conservation dollars on the 'right horse'. We are often uncertain of the likelihood that our chosen 'horse' will be a winner. We need to know more about its biology, what makes it tick yet we have little time to make these critical decisions before placing our bets. What we don't know now may jeopardize our bet. If we have no measure of the horse's capability, our bet is based on a hunch and we stand a good chance of losing our bet. If we never try to find out what the horse is capable of, then we can never know when it is running normally or slow. Bets anyone?

We can improve the odds for orchid conservationists by supporting their work. Many organizations now fund research projects on an orchid conservation theme. Perhaps your group does this already. If not, why not resolve to financially support orchid conservation in the next millenium.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

We must build the quality into conservation programs from the start. If we are going to make any headway over the medium term, we need well planned and executed

projects that employ the collective resources of not only orchid workers/enthusiasts but also of those in allied areas. Conservation projects will succeed or fail on the strength of the team. We personally may never know whether we succeeded or failed to conserve orchids but future generations will either hold us responsible for what we did wrong or, hopefully, will applaud us for our team effort. Let us resolve to be part of a global conservation team into the next millenium.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and should not be interpreted to represent opinions or policies of any Society, Congress, Group or institution.

DUES REMINDER

COC Treasurer, Janette Richardson, would like to remind societies that the deadline for dues is January 31, 2000. As of January 21, 17 societies had submitted their dues and six were outstanding. Janette is contacting those societies as she needs to have our books audited in time for the AGM. Only fully paid up members can vote at COC meetings.

SOCIETY NEWS

The Manitoba Orchid Society is the club showing the most growth with a 25% increase in membership over the past year. They are presently getting ready for their annual show scheduled for March 17-19, 2000 at the Assiniboine Conservatory in Winnipeg. Readers are welcome to check out the informative, well-designed web site <http://members.home.net/mosorchids/Index.htm>

Some smaller societies have a challenge finding enough members to keep their club going. There are still keen growers in these areas and we encourage them to keep in touch with the nearest active club. The David Thompson and Newfoundland societies are no longer active.

COC Newsletter on the Web

Please mention in your society newsletter that the COC Newsletters are available on the web at:

<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/OrchidSNS/cocnews.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

2000

February 12 - 13: Southern Ontario Orchid Society, Toronto Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. E at Leslie St., Toronto, Ontario.

March 2-5: The Victoria Orchid Society. 'A Window to Orchids' At the Leonardo da Vinci Centre, 195 Bay St., Victoria. Viewing and sales March 4-5. Contact: Mrs. Jeanette Franson, #213 2575 Alexander St., Duncan, BC Phone:250-715-0899.

March 3 - 5: Orchid Odyssey, COC Show, London, Ont. Contact: Judy Worrall, jworrall@ciaccess.com or by snail mail: Judy Worrall, London Orchid Society, Suite 162, 509 Commissioners Rd. W., London, Ont., N6J 1Y5. Phone: 519 471-2027

March 17 - 19: The Manitoba Orchid Society. For more information, please email: mosorchids@home.com

March 25 - 26: Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens, the 19th annual Show, 680 Plains Rd., Burlington, ON. Contact: Jim Brasch at jbrasch@mcmaster.ca

April 1 - 2: Les Orchidophiles de Montreal Show, College de Maisonneuve, 2700 Bourbonniere St., Montreal, Quebec. For more information: <http://www.dunord.com/orchidophiles>

April 7 - 9: The Regina Orchid Society at the Core Ritchie Community Centre, Regina. Contact Bryan Hebb, President, ROS For more information: bhebb@sk.sympatico.ca (306) 586-4789 fax (306)586-4790

April 29 - 30: Ottawa Orchid Society show, Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Ave., Nepean

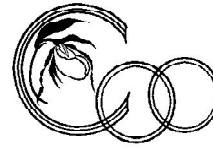
Sept 30 - Oct 1: Central Ontario Orchid Society, Peter Clark Hall at the University of Guelph, Guelph

Nov 4 - 5: Niagara Region OS, Queen Elizabeth Centre, Facer St. (QEW and Niagara St), St Catherines

COC Web Site:

<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/OrchidSNS/coc.html>

Please send in your show information - date, location, contact, etc.



news

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Editor: Jerry Bolce

The purpose of COC news is to inform members of the meetings, policies of the COC, to profile members, and to provide technical information regarding happenings, trends and techniques in orchid cultivation across the country and around the world.

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. Deadline for each issue is one month before the issue dates previously announced.

Recipients of this newsletter are strongly urged to pass a copy on to other members of their society

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