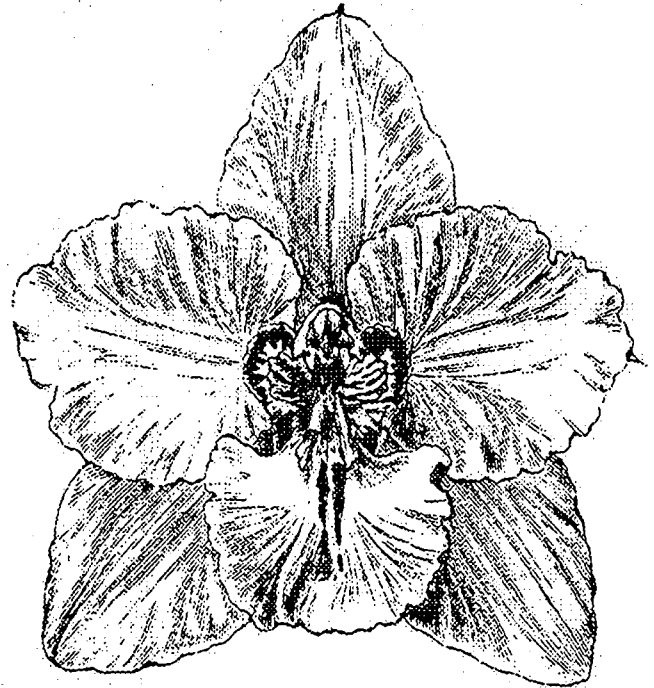


❖ Odontoglossum Alliance ❖

Newsletter

August 1998

International Odontoglossum Day World Orchid Conference 1999



The program and plans for the International Odontoglossum Day at the 1999 World Orchid Conference, Number 16, are taking final shape. The day is planned for Thursday, 29 April 1999 in Vancouver, British Columbia, the second day after the opening of the conference. The day will begin with a morning session of five talks. There is an Odontoglossum Alliance lunch at which time some of the auction donated material will be available. We expect to have a substantial amount of hard to obtain and unique plants, flasks, and other items. The material auctions will be divided between the noon luncheon and the evening dinner.

Lectures begin at 9:00 AM until 12:10 and commence again at 3:00 PM with the two final talks of the afternoon.

The Odontoglossum Alliance dinner is scheduled for the same evening at the Chinese Imperial Restaurant (a walking distance). The menu will be a banquet style with many courses. The menu will be published in a subsequent newsletter. In 1997 at our Odontoglossum meeting a dinner was held at the same location. We had room for 50 people and we had to turn away people who wanted to attend. This year we have made arrangements to accommodate 100 people. At the dinner we will be using a commemorative wine glass, which can be taken away. The balance of the auction material will be an exciting climax to the day.

Morning Program

Session Chairpersons: Terry and Doug Kennedy

Terry and Doug Kennedy live in Toronto, Canada where they grow a variety of orchids. Terry is an AOS judge. The Kennedy's were awarded the first Robert Dugger AOS trophy for their Odcdm. Cherry Fudge 'Mocha'. They have exhibited in numerous shows from coast to coast including the 11th World Orchid Conference in Miami in 1984.

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The 55 AOS show trophies and countless other awards document the success of these shows.

Doug is a past Vice President of the Mid America Orchid Congress. He has also served several terms as president and show chairman of the Southern Ontario Orchid Society and continues to act as a long term director. Having taken early retirement in 1997, he can now devote full time to his family and vocation-orchids.

1. TITLE: Conservation in Colombia: Bad News

Juan Felipe Posada, Medellin, Colombia S.A.

Abstract

Destruction for native habitats for flora and fauna in Colombia is being done at such a rate that in very few years not much of the original forests will exist. On one side the natural expansion of the population, that requires more land for housing, agricultural or cattle projects, keeps tearing down original untouched woods and forests. On the other side and even at a much higher rate Colombia's drug problem is causing great devastation.

Drug people destroy enormous areas of forest for their cocaine and heroin production. Once these areas become unlawful plantations the police and the army, with international help, come and fumigate by air with chemicals to root out these plants. To compensate for their production territory loss, then the drug people go further in to other natural areas where they start all over again. And this cycle never ends!

As a consequence the native habitats of our Andean Odontoglossum Alliance species will be lost forever.

Biography

Juan Felipe Posada was born in Medellin, Colombia. He grew up always involved with both parent families in farming, cattle, plants, etc. In 1963, along with his Mother, started a small collection of native orchids. Five years later he was joined by his Father, Jamie Posada, in the hobby collection. In 1972 the 7th World Orchid Conference was held in Medellin. At that time the orchid hobby was converted to a commercial nursery and named COLOMBOROQUIDEAS. Since then the nursery has expanded considerably and specializes in cool growing Andean species. Today Colomborquideas is owned jointly by Juan and his mother, Ligia Posada.

Juan Felipe is President of Industrias Estra, a 500 person plastic injection molding company, He has been Trustee and President of the Colombian Orchid Society in Medellin.

2. TITLE: Patterns of the Equatorial Odontoglossums

Alexander Hirtz

Diversity

PO Box 17-1200358

Quito, Ecuador, S.A

Abstract

Odontoglossums, considered as epiphytes, have also adapted to other common areas of no competition like extensive lava-flows and mud slides. The quasi hydroponic conditions on these extensive rocky surfaces are favorable for a healthy growth and allow for an odontoglossum species to multiply by the millions.

After the end of the last glaciation 12,000 years ago, the climate in the equatorial belt has changed dramatically. At least half of the orchid species are the result of punctuated orthgenetic macromutations triggered by adaptive radiation into the new habitats. Odontoglossums appear to be an exception, where the last macromutation probably happened in a previous period of interglaciation, after which natural selection had eliminated the weaker species, allowing for the strong species to invade large districts. During the last ice-age and the formation of new volcanoes, the forests were reduced to refugias, isolating the populations of a given species into various islands. During several mihernia, these populations have acquired distinct color characteristics and minor morphological distinctions to permit a taxonomist to subdivide them into varieties.

The equatorial odontoglossums are species which have matured in the wild competing to be the fittest, where the weaker species already have gone extinct and could be considered today among the least threatened ones, as they have adapted, along with the required microrhyza and respective pollinators, to thrive on many types of ecosystems conquering extensive geographic surf.

Biography

Alexander Hirtz Naundorff

Graduated at the Colorado School of Mines in 1973

Currently General Manager of Exotic Cultivos, a company specializing in the development of new tropical agro-industrial products; the main project currently under development to be this year on the shelf is ARAZA (*Eugenia stipitata*), a fruit optimal as a flavor and color enhancer to be mixed with other fruit to produce high quality marmalades, juices, ice-creams, etc..

President and co-founder of TROPICA 2000, a non-profit organization to particularly protect the cloud-forests of the Upper Amazon through protection of specific sites and develop new alternatives as income for the people who live in the surroundings and need to increase their standard of living as means to keep them away from logging the forest. Also TROPICA 2000 is actively involved in public awareness of the worldwide loss of habitat and bio-diversity in the equatorial cloud forest and rainforest.

President of the Latin-American Orchid Council since 1991

Member of the UICN Orchid Specialist Group

Corresponding member of the AOS Conservation Committee

Member of the Site Selection Committee of the World Orchid Conference

Member of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Ecuador

Curator (Ad-hoc) of the Museum of Natural Sciences of Quito

Director and co-founder of the Orchid Society of Quito

Director and co-founder of the Botanic Foundation of the Andes

Co-founder of the non-profit foundations: Antisana, Puruha, Consumers Protection Association and Eco-tourism Association

Co-founder of the University of San Francisco de Quito, currently considered to be the most revolutionary University in their teaching approaches and curriculums in Latin-America

Alex Hirtz has discovered or assisted in the discovery of over 600 new species of orchids and several new bromeliads and gesneriads and has co-authored with Dr. Carl Leur and Dr. Calaway Dodson over 300 descriptions of the newly discovered species.

3. TITLE: Conservation: A Working Point of View

Sandro Cusi, Rio Verde Orchids

Abstract

Conservation comprises a vast number of areas, many of which for practical reasons are for the present time almost beyond our reach in a country like ours. These reasons being mainly population size, rate of growth, and very short term government planning. Many conservation efforts are wasted because of badly designated objectives and planning that do not consider the local conditions. In order to take advantage of the limited resources available and local knowledge, a project was started in 1997 with the following ideas and objectives

1. Objective: To work in a small forested area in order to establish a management plan for the conservation of the place.
2. Main Purpose: To conserve the water quality and retention capacity of the basin, for human and agricultural uses.

3. Other Purposes: To conserve the habitat for epiphytes and other wildlife.
To obtain income from ecological tourism; Bird watchers, orchid lovers.
To help educate local people and tourists in the needs and advantages of conservation.

Biography

Sandro Cusi is owner of Rio Verde Orchids in Mexico. Rio Verde was begun 25 years ago with the purpose of propagating and distributing world wide Mexican orchid species. Breeding is done with superior forms of species as well as line breeding species. Rio Verde Orchids also produces decorative hybrids for the domestic Mexican market. Mr. Cusi has years of experience growing in the natural environment of Lemboglossums (now Rhyncostele). Rio Verde Orchids is in Apartado Postal No. 69, Valle de Bravo, Mexico 51300.

4. TITLE: The Subtribe Oncidinae (Orchidaceae) in the Mountains of Bolivia

Roberto Vasquez Chavez, Cochabamba, Bolivia

Abstract

In biological terms, Bolivia is considered a country of megadiversity. The presence of the Cordillera de Los Andes to the west, the extensive tropical forest of the Amazon basin to the North and East and the xerophytic Chaco forest to the South has configured a region very varied in topography and climate, and this combination of factors has created one of the most diverse regions on our planet, but at the same time, Bolivia is one of the least studied countries biologically.

It is believed that around 15,000 - 20,000 species of plants grow in this country, 10% of which belong to the Orchidaceae family. The subtribe Oncidinae is represented in Bolivia by 42 genera and more than 160 species, 25% of which are endemic. The genera with the most numerous species are *Oncidium* (48 spp.), *Odontoglossum* (16 ssp.), *Pachyphyllum* (10 ssp.) *Rodriguezia* (7 ssp.), and *Stigmatostalix* (6 ssp.). Undescribed species are constantly being found in the wet mountain forests and need to be studied soon. Increasing basic needs of a growing human population are contributing to the destruction of habitats with negative effects on living organisms including orchids.

Biography

Roberto Vasquez was born in Cochabamba, Bolivia and attended college at High Point, North Carolina with a degree in business administration. His major activities are farming and botany and specializing in orchids. He has been studying the orchids since 1872. With Dr. Calaway Dodson he has published 3 volumes of "Orchids of Bolivia" in the *Icones Plantarum Tropicarum* series, published by the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and Missouri Botanical Gardens.

To date 200 orchids, new to science, have been published in co-authorship with Dr. Carl Luer and Dr. Calaway Dodson. The genus *Vasqueziella* was named after, Roberto. He has been a speaker at World Orchid Conferences in Miami, 1984 and Rio de Janeiro, 1996. He is founder and President of the "Sociedad "Boliviana de Botánica".

5. TITLE: Endangered Hybrids

Robert Hamilton, Berkeley

Abstract

A century of hybridizing has given us spectacular odontoglossums and odontoglossum intergenerics. Within these hybrid plants reside a fabulous gene pool of species collected during the Victorian orchid craze - undeniably the best of the best. Regrettably, these species and their habitat are now gone forever. Today's growers have the responsibility to conserve this genetic treasure, in conflict, market forces, such as consumer taste and the goals of award systems drive hybridizing in directions that often destroy breeding "lines".

In "Endangered Hybrids", I define my concept of a breeding line and give strategies for preserving existing

lines and for creating new lines.

Chromosome counting provides a tool for increased yields. Experiments with the alkaloid colchicine may open yet unexplored pathways to new lines and intergeneric hybrids by creating parents with identical set of chromosomes.

Biography

Robert Hamilton has been growing orchids since 1976. In 1981, after hearing a talk by Robert Dugger, he converted to an Odontoglossum grower. He bought flasks and commenced building a stud collection, enhancing the collection from odontoglossum sources world-wide. In 1985 he initiated his own breeding program; doing his own sowing, flasking and raising of hybrids. He has done considerable hybridizing work following the research dictates of Don Wimber, using colchicine to obtain tetraploid species and re-creating many of the very earliest odontoglossum hybrids with very interesting results.

Afternoon Session

Session Chairman: Milton Carpenter, Executive Vice-President American Orchid Society.

Milton Carpenter, a native of the Florida Everglades, attended schools in Palm Beach County, the University of Florida and the Massachusetts Trades School in Boston, Massachusetts. He has been growing orchids for 38 years and is the owner of Everglades Orchids in Belle Glade, Florida. He is a past president and life member of the Orchid Society of the Palm Beaches. He is also Executive Vice President and a life member of the American Orchid society. He is an accredited Judge of the AOS.

6. TITLE: Odontoglossum -Taxonomically Endangered

Stig Dalström, Sweden and Sarasota, Florida

Abstract

A discussion about how to treat various groups of species-complexes in the genus Odontoglossum, which can be taxonomically justified to remain in the genus in a strict natural classification, which groups borderline other genera and which distantly related groups are placed in the genus based on convergent floral similarities only.

Biography

Stig Dalström, born and reared in Sweden, now lives as a resident in Sarasota, Florida, USA. His first experience with the Odontoglossum Alliance, was a couple of jungle collected plants, imported from Central America, which were the first orchids to grow relatively well and flower in his collection. This triggered a desire to find other related species and to learn more about them. A trip to Ecuador in 1979 turned out successfully plantwise, but as a failure nomenclaturally. This frustrating situation initiated a continuous quest to produce a taxonomical treatment for this large group of plants. He currently works for The Marie Selby Botanical gardens, Sarasota, Florida, as an artist, illustrator and researcher. He also works in conjunction with other taxonomists, organizations and institutions.

7. TITLE: Genetic Relationships of Oncidiums and Odontoglossums: Evidence from

Analysis of DNA Sequences.

Mark Chase, Kew Gardens, England and USA.

Abstract and Biography to be supplied.

Bringing Plants Home

At the Odontoglossum Alliance meeting in Vancouver in 1997 there were a large number of sources of supply of odontoglossum alliance material. It is expected that at the WOC there will be an even larger number of vendors with a broader range of alliance material. The show organizers had made arrangements with the Canadian officials in charge of plant exporting to be available at the hotel to provide the necessary documentation (CITIES and plant inspection certificates) to permit easy exiting Canada.

Also for those going to the United States, US Department of Agriculture officials were also at the hotel to provide the necessary documentation for entry of the plant material into the United States. The same arrangements were made in Toronto in 1998. It all worked very well.

Those Other Glossums

by Sue Golan

The Odontoglossums, since their discovery and description in 1815 and the arrival of *crispum* in 1845, have captured the attention and admiration of orchid growers everywhere. Scant attention was paid to the Central American species and very little hybridizing took place until the late 1970's when *Odontoglossum bictoniense* began to show the orchid world what it was capable of even though it had been sitting in the wings since its discovery in 1835.

The name *Lemboglossum* was chosen by Frederico Halbinger in 1984 in "Orquidea" to differentiate some of the Mexican and Central American species from those of South America. In 1993, again in "Orquidea", Soto and Salazar published the change from *Lemboglossum* to *Rhyncostele*. Originally, Lindley had named *Rhyncostele pygmaea*. In as much as it shares the characteristics of the other *Lemboglossums* and it was named first, they suggested that the entire group should be called *Rhyncosteles* and that the former *Messoglossum londesboroughianum* be included also.

These fifteen species were different in their floral aspects from the type species of *Odontoglossum*, *epidendroides*. Their geographical distribution in Mexico and Central America as opposed to South America (except *cordatum* which is found in both) makes their separation even more logical.

The callosity and adnation to the column are a typical feature of the *Rhyncostele* lip. The *Odontoglossums* have a lip claw which is almost parallel with the column. The claw extends to form a fleshy, boat-shaped callus, projecting forward with a pair of fleshy teeth. Plants are medium sized with the inflorescences that originate at the base of the pseudobulbs. The flowers have sepals and petals of the same size and with a cordate to roundish lip.

Having said all this, I will try to refer to these species as *Rhyncosteles*.

My approach is related to the judging system of the American Orchid Society. After all the papers I had to write as a student judge and probationary judge, I can scarcely view an orchid in any other way. Surely, however, the desire for fuller flowers on strong inflorescences with bright colors and patterns goes beyond the judging system and whispers to the commercial grower, "pot plant!"

Here are the *Rhyncosteles*. I was able to obtain slides for most of them.

<i>apterum</i>	<i>bictoniense</i> 'carne giant' 80 pt. AM/AOS
<i>candidulum</i>	<i>cervantesii</i> subspecies <i>membranacea</i> (pink)
<i>ehrenbergii</i>	<i>cervantesii</i> 'Fernbrook' 85 pt. AM/AOS
<i>galleotianum</i>	<i>cordatum</i> 'SueGee' 82 pt. AM/AOS
<i>hortensae</i>	<i>londesboroughianum</i>
<i>maculatum</i>	<i>maculatum</i> 'Don Diego' JC
<i>madrense</i>	<i>majale</i>
<i>pygmaeum</i>	<i>rossii</i>
<i>rossii</i> pink	<i>stellatum</i>
<i>uro-skinneri</i> 'Guatemala' 82 pt. AM/AOS	

bictoniense

Native to Mexico, Guatemala and El Salvador at 5200 -10400 feet, this was the first *Odontoglossum* species to survive a voyage to England. It was discovered by George Ure Skinner for whom the very similar *uro-skinneri* was named. It and *uro-skinneri* are the only terrestrials in the group.

The first cross made with *bictoniense* was *Stamfordiense* (x *uro-skinneri* 'Top of the Line' 82 pt. AM/RHS) in 1909. It has received five AOS awards.

Fifty years passed before *bictoniense* was used in breeding again, probably due to the discovery of *Odontoglossum crispum* and *pescatorei*. Their full round shape eclipsed the charms of the less showy species. Fifty-eight years later, over 150 crosses have been made with *bictoniense*.

The first award to a *bictoniense* hybrid was given to *Odontoglossum Summit* 'Coppercliff' 81 pt. AM/AOS, which was made in 1977 by crossing it with *Otoglossum brevifolium*. This was the first non *crispum* *Odontoglossum* to be awarded. It has received 6 AOS awards. The well spaced flowers on an upright inflorescence are intensely colored as are most *bictoniense* hybrids. The *Otoglossum* influence has produced some large plants. (The fabulous *Odontoglossum Cherry Fudge* was the result of crossing *Summit* with *Oncidium leucochilum*.)

The 7 awards to *Odontoglossum Red Nugget*, a 1981 cross with *cordatum* 'Seth' 81 pt. AM/AOS, make it the second most awarded primary cross with *bictoniense* as one parent. It is like an improved *cordatum* with a higher flower count. The intense coloration and triangular lip were noted in one award.

The 11 awards to *Odontoglossum Midnight Miracles* (x *carniferum*) (SueG 3 HCC/AOS) make it the most highly awarded *Odontoglossum* with *bictoniense* as one parent. The hybrid far surpasses its' parents in brilliance of color.

All these hybrids had *bictoniense* as a pod parent and, as such, it imparts some warm tolerance, compact plant size, erect vigorous inflorescences (occasionally branching) and an intensity of color and markings, usually in red, maroon and violet tones. It has been used almost five times as often as a pod parent which Milton Carpenter believes to be an indication of its' greater fertility as such.

There are also notable successes in the crossing of *Rhyncostele bictoniense* with other members of the *Oncidinae*. There are 8 awarded *Odontiodas* (not primary hybrids) with *Odontioda Outrageous* 'Ruby Eyes' 82 pt. AM/AOS, the clear winner (x *Oda. Concade*) with 7 awards including 3 AM/AOS's.

Colamnara Sir Jeremiah (*Miltonidium Lee Hirsch*) has several awards as does *Adaglossum Summit* (*Ada Keilana*).

Of 7 *Brassia* crosses with *bictoniense*, three are awarded (a good batting average) the most notable being *Odontobrassia Gordon Dillon* (x *Brassia maculata*) (Mary Kay 81 pt. CCM/AOS) with 8 awards. Though *bictoniense* was the pollen parent, the brilliant ruby lip and mahogany blotches on the sepals give a fabulous new look to the *Brassia* outline.

Twenty one crosses with *Oncidium* species have been made and 8 have been awarded. Among the best are *Elske Stolze* with 4 awards (x *ornithorhyncum* 'Lavender Lu 78 pt. HCC/AOS), *Black Beauty* with 7 awards (x *leucochilum* 'Saturday Night Special 77 pt. HCC/AOS, *Karli Ku* (x *crispum*) with 2 awards and *Thelma Ku* (x *marshallianum*) with 4 awards.

The more complex *Odontocidium*s have produced 5 awarded clones when crossed with *bictoniense*. *Bittersweet* is the most successful *bictoniense* hybrid to date with 5 AM's and 10 HCCs. This is 'Raspberry Torte' 80 pt AM/AOS. *Bictoniense* was crossed with *Odontocidium Crowborough* to make *Bittersweet*. In comparing 2 AM clones of these two crosses we can gauge the influence of *bictoniense*.

	Crowborough	Bittersweet
# Flowers	15	64
Natural Spread	6.3 cm	8.0 cm
Lip	~ 2.4 x 3.0 cm	3.5 x 3.3

Crowborough 'Spice Island' had tan sepals and petals with greenish gold tips with brownish maroon

spots. The lip was yellow/cream with maroon spots on the margin of the upper lobes. Out of 10 points for color, this sounds like a 5... Bittersweet 'Raspberry Torte' had 'richly "colored flowers" with a deep rose-red lip with white flecks across the middle center on a branching inflorescence. Even the black and white photos seem to indicate the glowing color produced by *bictoniense*. Give it 9 points for color.

Crossing *bictoniense* with complex *crispum* types of flowers has produced fewer awards than the primary hybrids have, possibly because the flowers are diminished in size by *bictoniense*.

The best are *Odontoglossum Ursula* (X *Phioman*) with 4 awards and *Odontoglossum Anneliese Rothenberger* (x *Goldrausch* 'gera 81 pt. AM/AOS) with 5. Crossing *Goldrusch* back onto *Anneliese Rothenberger* produced the lovely *Burkhard Holm*.

This species also crosses well with other *Oncidinae* such as *Comparettia*. *Odontoretia Mandarine* (x *speciosa*) has 4 awards. The clone 'Ciesinskis Canary 80 pt. AM/AOS was made with *bictoniense alba*. The album genes of this *bictoniense* have suppressed the red color from the *speciosa* to produce a yellow lip whereas the "normal" *Mandarine* has an orange lip. *Odontoretia* (x *falcata*) has 2 awards.

There are also *Rhodriglossums*, *Baptistoglossums*, *Gomezoglossums* and *Odontopolias*.

rossii

Discovered in Mexico over 75 years ago, *rossii* is the type specimen for the *Rhyncosteles*. It is second to *bictoniense* in its use as a *Rhynco.* parent. There is a pink variety and the variety and the variety "majus" which has larger flowers. There are several natural hybrids in areas where *rossii* and another *Rhyncosteles* have overlapping ranges.

R. x aspersa (*rossii* x *maculata*)

R. x humeana (*rossii* x *cordata*)

While the species has been awarded 5 times, its' hybrids have seldom been recognized by the judging community.

Rossii was not crossed with *bictoniense* until 1979. *Bic-ros* has 2 awards. This 79 pt. HCC/AOS is the clone 'Cleavage'. The *bictoniense* spotting covers the petals and dorsal with a flat lip in *bictoniense* pink. Putting *bictoniense* back onto the *Bic-ros* produced *Odontoglossum violetta von Holm* 'Orchid Man' 85 pt. AM/AOS. It had eleven flowers on an erect inflorescence and was commended for "vibrant color, flatness and arrangement on inflorescence". This intensity of color and pattern is very often the result in intergeneric breeding of the *Rhyncosteles*.

Odontoglossum Colonel Leith (2 awards) results from the crossing of *rossii* and *uro-skinneri*. First made in 1894, it received an AQ and an HCC/AOS in the 880's.

In an AOS Bulletin article in 1976, Artur Elle glowingly describes the results of using *rossii majus* with *Odotioda Feuerschein* to make *Oda. Hambuhren*. It has 2 awards. When put onto *Vuylsteakara Cambria* in 1994, the lovely *Helmut Sang* resulted.

Other Rhyncosteles

Uro-skinneri itself has 8 quality awards and 12 awarded hybrids, the best of which is its' cross with *bictoniense*, *Stamfordiense*. But in the second generation, it was used as a pod parent with *Odontoglossum Crowborough*, the same *Odot.* that made Bittersweet with *bictoniense*, to make *Colmanara Wildcat* with an astonishing 25 awards.

Candidulum and *apterum* are similar and have the largest flowers of the group and present opportunities for new kinds of breeding although *apterum*s flowers are short lived. *Candidulum* has wide petals and some alba attributes. When crossed with *bictoniense alba*, it produced this lovely flower.

Maculatum has only been used in breeding 22 times. Three of the crosses have been awarded. When it was used as a pod parent with *Odcdm. Tiger Hambuhren*, the result was *Odcdm. Tiger Barb* with 8 Awards. Put onto complex *Odontoglossums*, *maculatum* is producing some yellows with substance and striking patterns and contrast. Here it is crossed with *Hallii-crispum*.

When used in intergeneric breeding, Rhynchostele provide strong color saturation and pattern, more than is seen in the Rhynchostele parent alone. The strong self-erect spikes are typical. Some temperature tolerance has been noted also. On the downside, the fertility is sometimes low and foliage may appear necrotic.

Intergeneric breeding also brings forth strong clear color and pattern on fertile plants. Here is Odontoglossum Solo 'Otto', a cross of cordatum and uro-skinneri. The uro-skinneri shape is enhanced by the intense spotting and saturated color of cordatum.

The future looks bright for this kind of colorful breeding and, judging from the French names given to many of the latest registered rossii hybrids, those Rhynchosteles have caught the eye of the Eric Young Orchid Foundation. We are in for a treat!

Special thanks to Steve Beckendorf, Sandro Cusi and Bob Hamilton for their assistance and generosity with time and slides.

Editors Note: This talk was delivered by Sue Golan at the 1998 Odontoglossum Alliance meeting in Toronto, Canada.

J. Gurney Fowler

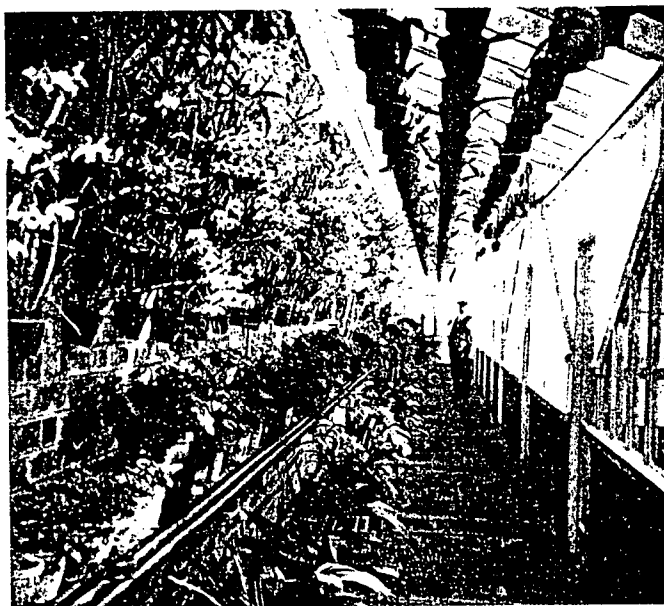
by Graham Yearsley

Perusal of the names of members of the Royal Horticultural Society Orchid Committee, and the orchid award winners in periodicals such as *The Orchid Review* and *The Orchid World* from 1899-1916 reveals one name which was consistent, was that of J. Gurney Fowler.

J. Gurney Fowler was born in Woodford, Essex on 5 December 1855 and in due course took up residence at 'Glebelands', South Woodford, where he created a garden which reflected all the arts and crafts of horticulture. Here he built up a fine array of trees, flowering shrubs, how-house plants, and a renowned collection of orchids. A report in *The Orchid World* 1911 quotes Shelley's word: "*All rare blossoms from every clime Grew in that garden in perfect prime*".

The Glebelands Collection

Several large greenhouses housed the orchid collection. One, devoted to odontoglossums, 70 ft (256m) x 20 ft (73m) apparently gave the greatest pleasure. It was adapted to provide the optimum conditions for the growth of the genus. It was span roofed, the wooden spars being grooved to carry away the drips, and the glass, as was the vogue of the day, being curved to attain the same object. Shading was achieved by canvas blinds raised above the glass, and cooling and damping on hot days of summer were managed with a perforated water pipe running along the ridge. The internal brickwork was kept damp with a similar pipe. These pipes were fed from the district water mains, but the surplus water produced was not allowed to



Interior view of the corridor at Brackenhurst showing plants of *Dendrobium nobile* in flower on the wall. (From *The Orchid World* 1914)

enter the tanks reserved for rainwater. Obviously there was no question then concerning water conversation! Heating was by 4 in (10 cm) hot water pipes, in front of which was a wall of loose bricks with tiles on top, thus encasing the heating system in a moisture holding material. About 2 ft (60 cm) above the tiles was teakwood staging thus allowing free circulation of moist air.

The Glebeland's *Odontoglossum*, collection was one of the finest in the country, and made a magnificent display in springtime. There were many awarded varieties of *Odontoglossum crispum*, among which were *Odm. Crispum* 'Angela' Am/HS (1909), *Odm. Crispum* 'Britain's Queen' Am/RHS (1905), *Odm. Crispum* 'Elsie' - apparently one of the best, *Odm. Crispum* 'Luciana' FCC/RHS (1897), *Odm. Crispum* 'Olive' and many more. Others included *Odm. Amanile* 'Fowleriana AM/RHS, *Odm. Arnoldianum* AM/RHS (1910), *Odm. Europa* FCC/RHS (1911), (*coeruleum x crispum*) with purplish-blue flowers, which was the nearest to the wished-for blue, and *Odm. Fowlerianum* FCC/RHS (1906) (*rossii var. rubescens x cirrhosum*).

All the plants were potted in *Osmunda* fiber, top dressed with a fibrous peat and *Sphagnum* moss mixture. A few chopped leaves were also included, beech being preferred to oak as they contained less tannin.

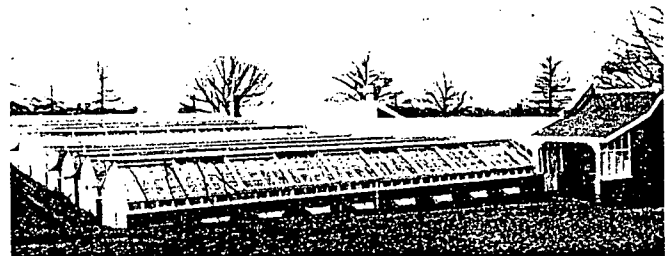
On the centre stage were large plants of *Oncidium macrantbum*, one of which flowered with over 350 blooms, and other tall-growing orchids. There were also various cymbidiums. One hybrid raised at Glebelands was *Cymbidium* Glebelandense, this being exhibited at the RHS on 3 June 1911, *Cym* Glebelandense (Roseum) was shown 15 April 1911.

Among the cypripediums (paphiopedilums) were *Cyp. Nitens* 'Glebelandi', *Cyp. Louisa* Fowler, *Cyp. Mrs. Alfred* Fowler, *Cyp. Baron* Shroeder, to name a few.

Laelias and cattleyas were there in abundance, consisting of, as one might guess, the finest forms of the leading species and hybrids. *Cattleya mendelii* 'J. Gurnery Fowler' was one of the best forms in existence. Also present were *Cattleya shroederiae* 'Flowers variety', *Cattleya labiata* 'Princess of Wales' FCC/RHS (1899), *Brassocattleya* Digbyano-purpurata, 'King Edward VII' and *Laelia tenebrosa*, 'Walton Grange'. In 1895 the firm of F. Sanders and Sons honored Mr. Fowler by naming one of their *Cattleya* hybrids Fowleri (*Hardyana x leopoldii*).

In other houses were to be found *Eulophiella peetersiana*, *Anduloa cliftonii*, *Lycaste skinneri*, *Lycaste* Balliac, *Zygopetalum perrenoudii*, *Sobralia macrantha*, which carried up to 350 flowers, thunias *Arachmanthe*, species FCC/RHS (1907), *Neomoorza trorata* from Colombia, stanhopeas in baskets, *Vanda teres*, and excellent specimens of *Phalaenopsis*.

Such a vast, wide-ranging collection of first class orchids requiring many different cultivation techniques must have been a great credit to the grower Mr. J. Davis. It is surprising that many of these gifted growers have never received the recognition they deserve.



The range of greenhouses at Brackenhurst (from *The Orchid World* 1914)

The Brackenhurst Collection

In 1913 Mr. Fowler bought from a Miss Molesworth, an estate in Pembury near Tunbridge Wells in Kent called

Brackenston. For some reason I cannot trace, this name was change to Brackenhurst. Here he developed another well laid out garden on the four acre plot. He commissioned Armstrong and Brown, the orchid firm from Tunbridge Wells, to construct a fine range of orchid houses which , according to a Mr. R. Ragg of Christchurch, New Zealand, was the finest he had ever seen. (*The Orchid World* 1916). There were seven housed each 58 ft (212 m) long, four of them 10 ft 6 in (36 m) wide, one 19 ft 6 in (71 m), another 22 ft 6 in (82 m), and the largest 24 ft (88 m) wide. All the houses were linked with a corridor 100 ft (366 m) long. There was also a span-roofed house, which was used for cool growing masdevalias, and for retarding any plants required for important shows. In addition to these was a lean-to for other cool growing plants which was 50 ft (150 m) by 12 ft (41 m). There was a potting shed 22 ft (82 m) by 12 ft (41 m). All houses had rain water tanks, top and bottom ventilators, and hot water piping served by large boilers. The floor was natural soil and on either side of the path, the staging was supported on arched brickwork. This was in two sections, the under one being of red tiles resting on angle-iron supports, and the upper of wooden laths. The temperature in the houses was constant, as the inner brickwork stored sufficient heat to counteract any fluctuations caused by low fires or severe weather. Other innovations at the time were telephones and electric lighting in all the greenhouses. Mr. J. Davis remained the grower in charge of both collections. The wellbeing of the staff was not forgotten. There was a bothy with a living room, three bedrooms and a bathroom, the latter a luxury not found in many working class homes at that time.

As at Glebelands the best species and hybrids available were constantly being added to the collection. Some hybrids were bred at Brackenhurst. *Odontoglossum* in great variety were to be found in the cool houses, those of special note were *Odm. Aquitainia*, *Odm. Smithii*, *Odm. Illustrissimum*, *Odm. Pembury* and *Odm. Amethyst 'Glebelands'*. Among the odontiodas were *Oda. Madeleine (Oda. Chariesorthii x Odm. crispum) 'Brackenhurst'*, and *Oda. Chanticleer*. Most of these were grown as specimen plants.

Cattleyas and their hybrids were in abundance. *Cattleya warscewiczii* 'Firmin Lambeau' was of particular note, originating from Armstrong and Brown, and winning the RHS Gold



Mr. J. Gurney Fowler admiring *Odontoglossum Illustris* Europa, which fetched 105 guineas at auction. (from *The Orchid World*, 1914)

Medal on 16 July 1912. Others included *Cattleya* Princess Royal (Fabiana x Hardyana), with red sepals and petals and crimson lip with yellow veining, *Cattleya* Antiope AM/RHS (1914) (Chamberlainiana x Dowiana), and *Laeliocattleya* Mrs. Evelyn Norief AM/RHS (1914) a canary yellow flower with dark purple lip tinged with yellow.

Considerable space was allotted to cymbidiums and cyripediums (paphiopedilum). Among the latter were to be seen *Cyp.* Waltonense 'Rubrum', *Cyp.* Desdemona, *Cyp.* King Alfred and *Cyp.* Acreus Bianca which came from the Westonbirt collection.

Other orchids providing much interest were aerides, vandas, anguloas, phalaenopsis, and the rare species *Neomoorea irrorata* and *Eulophia scripta*.

Corridors are primarily for linking housed together, and a boon during inclement weather. They also help in conserving heat. However, they can also be of great value for display purposes.

The Brackenhurst corridor must have been quite a sight during March and April when massed dendrobiums suspended on wires from the back wall were in flower. All the popular free-flowering types were grown. From the roof hung a large collection of Mexican, and other sun-loving orchids which included varieties of *Laelia anceps*, *Laelia gouldiana*, and *Cattleya (Encyclia) citrina*.

The Sale

Whilst maintaining his collections at Glebelands and Brackenhurst, Mr. Fowler was a regular exhibitor at the principal shows and won numerous awards, about which he was apparently very modest.

After 20 years of growing orchids and just three years after starting his collection at Brackenhurst, Mr. Fowler died on 24 April 1916 at the age of 60. He had an attack of influenza, which was followed by bronchitis and inflammation of the lungs which in turn resulted in heart failure. Over the three days 21, 22 and 23 June his orchids were sold by Mr. Harold Morris of Protheroc and Morris in the garden of Brackenhurst. There was great enthusiasm, many potential buyers traveling long distances, for it was said that on no previous occasion had so many choice species been offered by auction. The same claim was made about the Talbot Clifton collection auction in 1910. (See O.R. May/June 1996) Everything was done for the comfort of those attending. Lunch in a marquee was served each day, and Miss Louisa Fowler, Mr. John Fowler, and Mr. and Mrs. Alf Fowler were in attendance. Among the many orchids sold *Cattleya warscewiczii* 'Firmin Lambeau' was purchased by Armstrong and Brown who sold it to Mr. Fowler originally for 210 guineas (£227.30), *Cattleya schroederiae* 'Glebelands' fetched 18 guineas (£19.30), *Cattleya Luegeae* 'Fowler's variety' 45 guineas (£48.45), *Cattleya* Hardyana 'Countess of Derby' 50 guineas (£54.10) and *Odontoglossum* 'Pembury' 50 guineas (£54.10). Altogether the sale realized over £6,200.

The Man

Mr. Fowler was by profession an accountant, and from 1900 he occupied the position of Treasury for The Royal Horticultural Society, where he rendered invaluable service. In 1898 he became a member of the RHW Orchid Committee, and was vice-chairman in 1902. He held the post of chairman from 1905 until the time of his death.

Whilst on the committee he published at his own expense, a 'List of Orchid Award 1895-1915, which was an accurate work of reference to which the necessary additions were made annually. He presented a copy to all members of the committee. He was also the chairman of the Great Horticultural Exhibition of 1912 the forerunner of the Chelsea Flower Show. Its success was said to be due to his strenuous efforts.

Apparently his manner portrayed him as an austere and brusque man, but to those who knew him he had a fairness of mind, and a kindly nature. In all his great efforts in horticulture and particularly orchidology he gained world-wide renown, and a successor was not easy to find.

What is there today to remind us of this great personality? According to the Pembury Local History Society, information is practically non-existent. In the 1930's Brackenhurst was known as 'Strathbogie', and locally is still called the 'The Dower House'. From 1960 until 1989 it was owned and used by the local government. Since then it has opened as a hotel. Glebelands is remembered with a Glebelands Avenue, immediately west of South Woodford Underground Station.

One curious fact emerges in that according to Pembury parish burial records, a Joseph Gurney Fowler was interred on 27 April 1917. He is stated as being a child, but is not buried in the children's section of the graveyard. Could there have been a mistake in the records, and it was Mr. Fowler or a son/grandson? His widow, Louisa Fowler (*Cypridium* Louisa Fowler) was buried on 6 January 1930.

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Request for all Odontoglossum Alliance Suppliers

If you are a supplier of Odontoglossum Alliance material and plan to be selling at the World Orchid Conference in Vancouver please take notice. If you will send me, up to one half page, listing your organization name and the types and kinds of odontoglossum alliance material you will be selling, I will print it in both the November 98 and February 99 Odontoglossum Alliance newsletters. You may mail the material to me at:

Odontoglossum Alliance
PO Box 38
Westport Point, MA 02791

or Fax to
508-636-6143

John E. Miller
Editor

Dues Reminder 1998-99

I am sending out the final reminder for dues to those who have yet to pay for 1998-1999. I have included your newsletter as well. This is the final reminder to be sent. With the November Newsletter I will be sending out a membership list as well. **IF** you have not paid your dues, you will not be on the membership list nor receive further mailing of newsletters. This is the best we can do.

Two reminders and that is it.

Auction Material for the Odontoglossum Meeting at the 16th World Orchid Conference

The International Odontoglossum Alliance Day at the 16th World Orchid Conference is rapidly approaching. We have an interesting and informative program with many pleasureable social events. The auctions of rare and unusual odontoglossum alliance material has come to be a welcome tradition. Participants have the opportunity to obtain material not otherwise available. Contributors have been most generous in their donations. The proceeds of previous auctions have been used to enhance the newsletters and provide support for the lecture series.

The program has been organized by the three Odontoglossum Alliance groups-Britain New Zealand and the Americas. Our intention with the proceeds of the auction is to cover the extraordinary expenses of the meeting and divide the remaining amount equally between the three alliance.

We ask every Odontoglossum Alliance member to contribute one or more items to the auction Make the items something new, rare, well known or unusual that would be desired by other members of our growing group. If you are attending the meeting bring the material with you. If you are not attending **Find** someone who is going and ask them to bring it along. If you know a commercial grower, who will be attending and selling, ask them to include it along with their material. In my next newsletter I will identify some collection points for your donations to make it easy for you. But right now is the time to review you own collection and set aside those few items you plan to contribute. In the past we have had divisions of awarded plants, flasks of new crosses, remakes of successful crosses and and selling of superior forms both hybrids and species. There has been contributions of historic material such as lithographs of odontoglossums, paintings from judging results, and books. But what ever, we are asking members to make a special effort this time to contribute, both to make our meeting a financial success and pleasureable for all the givers and attendees.

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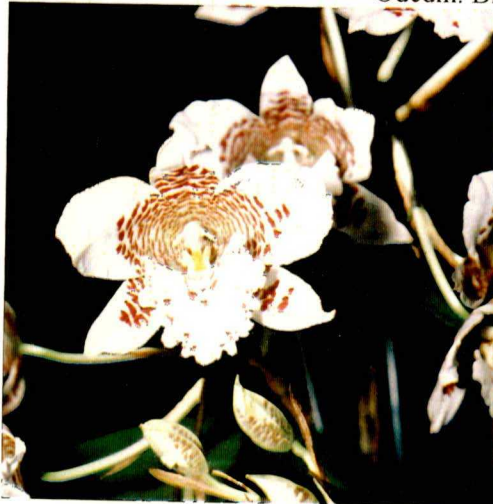
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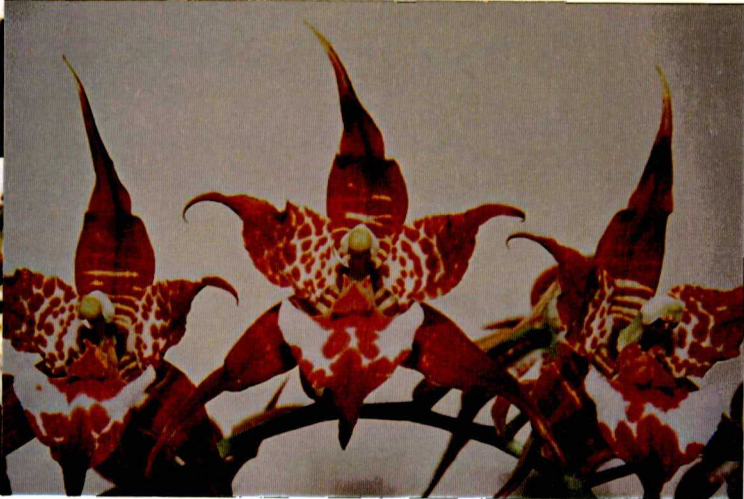
Odbrs. Gordon Dillon 'Mary Kay' CCM/AOS

Odm. Bic-Ross 'Clevage' HCC/AOS

Odcdm. Black Beauty 'Saturday Night Special' HCC/AOS



Odm. cervantisii 'Fernbrook' AM/AOS



Odm. cordatum 'Sue Gee' AM/AOS



Odm. uro-skinneri 'Guatemala' AM/AOS



Odontorettia Violatta 'Cardinals Roost' AM/AOS



Odrta. Mandarin
'Ciesinski Canary' AM/AOS



Odm. *bictoniense* 'Cerne Giant' AM/AOS



Odm. Summit 'Coppercliff' AM/AOS



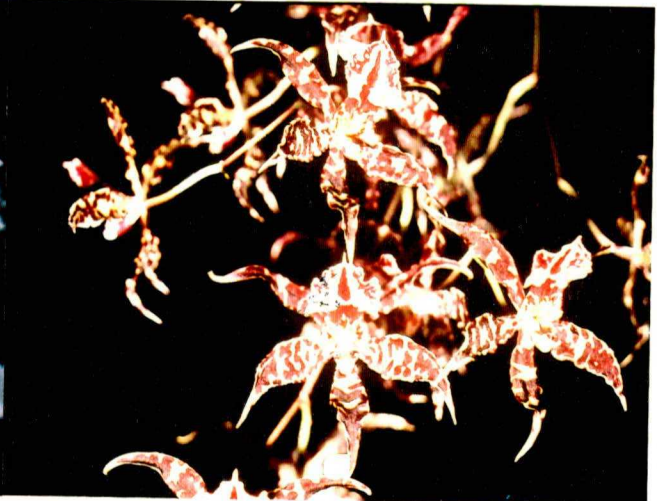
Odcdm. Bittersweet 'Raspberry Torte' AM/AOS



Lemboglossum maculatum



Odm. *rossii*



Odm. Midnight Miracles 'Sue G.3' HCC/AOS