

# The Sheath

## October Meeting

Date: October 28, 2011

Time: Doors Open 7:00 PM

Place: San Mateo Garden Center

605 Parkside Way, San Mateo, CA

Take the Alameda de las Pulgas exit off of Hwy. 92.  
The Garden Center is located between 26th and 28th  
Avenues

Mailing address: P.O. Box 6894, San Mateo, CA 94403-6894

### The Mysterious Maxillarias

Speaker: Dan Newman

*Maxillaria* is one of the most widespread and diverse orchid genera of Tropical America. It contains charming miniatures, spectacular, large-flowered species, and many of intermediate size. Plant habit is varied, with some species having clustered, pseudobulbous growths similar to *Oncidiums*, some with monopodial stems reminiscent of *Vandas*, and still others with growths held on a rambling rhizome, like many of the *Bulbophyllums*. There are hot-growing species from the tropical lowlands, cold growers from the high slopes of the Andes, and many adaptable, intermediate growers from moderate elevations in the mountains of Central and South America.

A few species, such as the coconut-scented *Maxillaria tenuifolia*, have long been popular in

orchid collections. Many other beautiful members of the genus have only become available within the last decade or two, largely through Central and South American vendors who bring plants for sale to orchid shows in the U.S.

Fortunately, most of these recent introductions are now being grown from seed and division, both domestically and by nurseries in Tropical America, enabling hobbyists to acquire plants without fear of decimating wild populations.

Despite the increasing popularity of the Maxillarias, taxonomy of the genus remains poorly understood. The situation is complicated by the large number of species

Skill Session at 7:05PM

**Paul Simon**

Orchid Photography

**Meeting plus Show and Tell  
Table - 7:45 PM followed  
by**

Speaker: **Dan Newman**

**Mysterious  
Maxillarias**

Opportunity table by  
**Hanging Gardens**



*Maxillaria fractiflexa*

recently introduced to cultivation and the absence of a modern, comprehensive taxonomic treatment, leaving many of us wondering how to label our plants. Perhaps identity of the species will become clearer in time, but meanwhile, the mysterious Maxillarias can add a touch of the unknown to our lives!

The presentation will illustrate some of the diverse forms of this fascinating genus in the context of the regions where they occur, and provide cultural information based on one grower's experience.

Dan Newman started growing orchids in 1982. His first successful subject was a Dendrobium hybrid bought as a tiny seedling at a lei stand in the Honolulu Airport. When that plant finally grew up and bloomed a few years later, he was hooked! By 1996 he had 350 orchids in a one-bedroom apartment. That year he moved his plants into a rented commercial greenhouse in San Francisco. He took over the large species collection of his friend and "orchid mentor", Walter Teague, and his hobby evolved into his nursery, Hanging Gardens. Dan started growing orchids full-time in 2000, and moved to a larger greenhouse in Pacifica a few years later. He currently has 12,000 to 15,000 plants, mostly cool to intermediate growers (it's hard to maintain warm conditions in Pacifica!). This number includes a few hybrids, but the great majority are species. He also grows a variety of "companion plants", that share the natural habitats of orchids.



*Maxillaria sanguinea*

Dan joined the San Francisco Orchid Society in 1987, and served as its president in 1996/97. He has been a member of the Peninsula Orchid Society since 2001. In recent years, he has spoken on a variety of topics to orchid societies in California and elsewhere.

### **Skill session: Photograph your Orchids by Paul Simon**

I'll show you some hints and ideas to assist you in photographing your orchids with film or a digital camera. Here's a different approach to get the photos you want when you look at your orchids. Bring pencil and paper.

### **Opportunity table:**

**Hanging Gardens** will supply another fabulous Opportunity Table! Dan always brings great plants. Dan will also be bringing wonderful plants for sale.



Carol, Mary, Rene, and Dave had a great time checking bidders and entries in, and providing invoices. Dan was waiting to start entering winning bids on the white board.



Mike and Janusz lead the crowd in warm-up exercises so no one would get hurt snapping their paddle arm up.

Japheth. Others looked on stunned when I snapped my paddle into the air. (Someone nearby said to me "I guess you know what your doing". But she didn't sound all that sure.) I had recognized the clonal name as



belonging to Bill Thoms - a combination of his name with his wife Dora's that can be found on many of their AOS awarded plants. After I bought it I saw that Japheth had originally set the minimum at \$49, then reconsidered. Would I have bought it for \$49? We'll never know.

### 2011 POS Auction

We held the auction on a Saturday afternoon instead of our traditional Friday meeting night. Everyone who attended found it more relaxing and enjoyable - no combatting rush hour traffic after work, and more time to run the event.

With 248 items entered, the expert auctioneers, Ken, Dennis, and Mike, had time to discuss cultural needs for each plant and answer questions.

This year's average prices were much better than last year - and we had a higher percentage of orchids in bloom. All of the plants entered for sale and all those donated were high quality, so the only items that ended up at the \$5 "buy it now" table were some decorative baskets.

We did attract a few buyers from our street signs. This was one of our goals and one reason for having the auction in the afternoon. Outside buyers received an information sheet including our website address. Hopefully some of them will attend a meeting and/or come to our show.

I was very happy to sell my *Phragmipedium*. *Cardinale* for \$48. (This was a division of the orchid I had sectioned and repotted during a skill session.) I was also thrilled to buy *Bulbophyllum*. *sumantranum*. 'a-dorabil' for the \$39 minimum bid price set by



Patrick and Susan were looking forward to bidding!



**The Auction Statistics  
provided by Rene Biggs**

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>
Total # of providers:	38	46	39
Total # of donors (included in above number):	27	40	24
# of items auctioned:	248	384	424
# of donated items:	85	218	436
# of bidders:	45	46	68
# of buyers:	44	44	60
# of plants not sold:	0		
Total Sales:	\$5,395	\$4,747	\$7,137
Tax collected:	\$423	\$402	\$529
Payments to Providers:	\$2,458	\$2076	\$2,593
Net Profit to POS:	\$2,514*	\$2548	\$3656

\* Expenses not deducted yet

**Fall Santa Cruz Orchid Show and Sale**

Saturday, November 12, 2011, 9 AM to 5 PM  
 Sunday, November 13, 2011, 10 AM to 4 PM

At Soquel High School, 401 Old San Jose Road, Soquel

Free Parking  
 Free Admission



Disa Foam

Presented by the Santa Cruz Orchid Society and the Soquel High School FFA/ROP

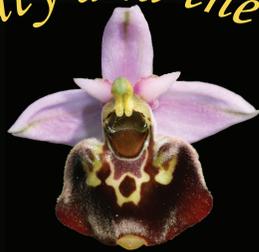
- American Orchid Society judged show, featuring rare and beautiful orchids
- Cultural advice available
- Exotic yet easy to grow plants for sale
- Potting demonstrations
- Raffle

For more information, contact the Santa Cruz Orchid Society by e-mail at:  
[info@santacruzorchidsociety.org](mailto:info@santacruzorchidsociety.org)



Photo by Frank Drake

*Beauty and the Bees*



**Southland Orchid Show**  
 at the Huntington Library,  
 Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens  
**October 14-16, 2011**  
 Friday 12:00pm - 4:30pm  
 Saturday & Sunday 10:30am - 4:30pm  
 Exhibits by Southern California Orchid Societies & International Orchid Growers  
 Orchids & Supplies for Sale by Vendors from Around the World  
 Orchid Symposia on Saturday and Sunday  
[www.orchidshow.org](http://www.orchidshow.org)

Design: Ted Augustyn

Photo of *Ophrys fuciflora* : Didier Bier



## Andy's Orchids – Sacrifices and Rewards

by John OConnell

Reprinted by permission from the Carmel Orchid Society *Backbulb*

An orchid addiction requires sacrifices: time, space, money. My July visit to Andy's Orchids was no different: 1000 miles of driving, hotel bills, and then there was the bill for the orchids! There were less tangible sacrifices too: a few extra pounds (too much food, no exercise), regrets over orchids not brought home, and sights not seen while I was orchidizing (my wife tells me that the beach life was eye popping). But then the rewards were great too: a dozen cool, hard to find orchids and three hours of wandering through



Andy's greenhouses seeing and hearing first-hand how he grows his plants. Andy's was worth the sacrifice because I have been buying plants from Andy since I started collecting over 10 years ago, and have always gotten interesting, unusual, and well grow plants from him, and Andy's is THE place to go for unusual species.

If you have not heard of Andy's orchids it is worth getting acquainted. Andy and Harry Phillips run perhaps the largest and best, species only orchid business in the USA. They are located about a mile from the ocean in Encinitas, just north of San

Diego. Besides being a huge species only greenhouse (I will overlook the *Rossioglossum Rawdon Jester*, it arrived mislabeled), Andy is known for his mounted plants ("Orchids on a Stick") and his iconoclastic ideas on orchid culture.

I have been buying from and talking to Andy and his brother Harry at shows for quite a while and I knew the stats, somewhere from 5-7 thousand species, and half a million plants. I expected to be overwhelmed, but left more overwhelmed than I expected. You could go back several times and see a completely different set of plants.

The "greenhouse" is really a set of 10-12 interconnected growing areas, only the warm and intermediate areas are enclosed, the rest is covered with only 30% shade cloth. The greenhouses are packed with plants, those needing close to full sun are way up high, and shady growers are on or just over the benches, everything else is hanging somewhere in between. Some areas are rigged for automatic watering but most of the plants are hand watered. There must be a lot of hand weeding going on too. I saw very few weeds, just a few





ferns growing here and there, Andy would grab one now and then and pull it out. All the greenhouses were very clean and neat. The lack of weeds extended to bugs, never saw one, I did catch an occasional whiff of insecticide, which explains the lack of insect life.

At the end of my visit we ended up in the office which, like the greenhouses, was packed, but instead of plants the office contained every issue of Orchids magazine from the 70's on and Orchid Digest from almost as far back. On the walls and much of the rest of the shelf space is the largest collection of show

trophies (Andy's show exhibits are dazzling) I have seen. Tags are printed on a special printer, invoices are generated from the computerized plant inventory. I commented that I was impressed that he was able to keep track of all those plants, and Andy confided that they don't. He thought that only about half of the species are in the inventory. There are lots that are waiting to bloom so they can be identified, or have resisted Andy's best efforts to identify them. I bet there are a bunch of undescribed species in those greenhouses.

Andy has some "unconventional" ideas on orchid culture. First of all Andy believes in watering, not spritzing, or a quick spray, but drenching, sometimes multiple times, sometimes in the evening so the plants stay wet longer. Heresy you may say, watering at night causes rot and fungal diseases. Andy says that's how it works in nature, in the tropics it rains in the afternoon and the plants stay wet all night. The tags on Andy's plants have some cultural information on them, most of it seems fairly conventional, like: *Masdevallia coccinea* shade to bright 1500-2500 foot-candles. I saw him growing these on benches under 30% shade cloth, a lot brighter than 2500 fc. There were a lot of plants growing right up at the top of this "greenhouses" under just that 30% shade cloth, many with tags that said intermediate temperatures which obviously were going a lot under 50 degrees in the winter.

I went to Andy's expecting to be overwhelmed, and was overwhelmed beyond my expectations. I could go back several times and not see everything, there is simply too many plants to take it all in in one visit. And Andy knows ALL the plants from memory and has stories or advice about most of them. Andy's is a greenhouse visit all orchid lovers should try to make at least once.

John OConnell

---

**Thank you** to our members who donated orchids and items for the auction! Also to the commercial growers who donated orchids: Andy's Orchids, Cal Orchid, Ecuagenera, Gold Country Orchids, Napa Valley Orchids, Orchid Design, Orchids and Gardens, Orchids of Los Osos, Paphiness, and Golden Gate Orchids. Thanks also for donations from Cynthia Hill and from the San Francisco Orchid Society.

## Upcoming Events

**Nov. 5 & 6 Orchid Society of California Fall Show and Sale**, Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Drive, Lake Merritt, Oakland. 10 AM to 5 PM both days. Free admission. Website, [www.orchidsocietyofcalifornia.com](http://www.orchidsocietyofcalifornia.com)

**Nov. 5 & 6 53rd Annual Santa Barbara Orchid Estate Fall Open House**, Saturday November 5, 8 AM to 5 PM, Sunday November 6, 9 AM to 4 PM. For more information call (800) 553-3387 or [www.sborchid.com](http://www.sborchid.com)

**Nov. 12 & 13 Santa Cruz Orchid Society Show and Sale**, Soquel High School, 401 Old San Jose Rd., Soquel, CA 94073. Saturday 9 AM - 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission and parking are FREE! For more information go to [http://www.santacruzorchidsociety.org/show\\_sale.html](http://www.santacruzorchidsociety.org/show_sale.html) Everyone is welcome to enter their orchids in this show: enter plants between 5 - 8 PM on Friday, Nov. 11th and pick them up at 4 PM on Sunday.

**Nov. 26 & 27 Orchid Society of Santa Barbara Fall Show and Sale**. Held at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. Museum admission charge includes the show. For more information go to [www.orchidsb.net](http://www.orchidsb.net).

**January 28th & 29th Peninsula Orchid Society Show and Sale**, Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt Ave, Redwood City - 10 AM to 5 PM both days - orchid show, presentations and demonstrations, member sales area, and vendor sales area. Adult admission only \$5. Seniors, disabled, and children 12-16 admitted for \$3. Parking is free.

---

### Crazy 2011 weather, crazy orchid bloom times

I thought the cymbidiums were oddly timed this past winter, but I got a big surprise when I was looking around in my greenhouse today. For the past week I have noticed a pleasant smell in the greenhouse at night, but couldn't figure out what it could be. As I was separating the tangled roots of some 2" cattleyas on the top shelf, there was the *Angraecum didieri* in the middle of them and in bloom. It had already bloomed in the spring, at its normal time, and I had noticed that it looked like it was going to put out another bud at another site, but it just didn't happen. I didn't think any more about it until today when I had the pleasant surprise of finding it with its beautiful long spurred white flower. I checked it out on [www.orchidspecies.com](http://www.orchidspecies.com) and found that it is listed only as blooming from April through June in the northern hemisphere.

However, I just happened to be looking at the January 2010 newsletter since I wrote the above paragraph and noticed that Dan Newman had brought an *Angraecum didieri* to the December meeting Show & Tell table. Since I purchased mine from Dan, maybe his are not so fussy about when they bloom. Or maybe the information on the orchid species website is not correct. Or maybe they are not really didieri. Always more questions than answers!

## Member News



*A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO: Jim Baxter, Isabelle Block, Fred Cox, Sharon deWit, Connie Hernandez, Jon-Michael Irvin, Mangala Kishen, Janet Mountjoy, Pat Proctor, Anne M. Riegel, David Shen, Annie Stoner, and Barry Zimmerman.*

*On a very sad note: Long time member Morton Block (Mort to us) passed away on August 22nd. He is survived by his wife Isabelle, who is also a long time member, and their children Dr. Gordon Block, Kevin Block and Alison Parks.*

*Mort was born on March 14th, 1920, in Omaha Nebraska. His family moved to California when he was 3. Our condolences to Isabelle and their children. Following is a remembrance of Mort, contributed by C. Todd Kennedy.*

### Mort Block

Longtime POS member Mort Block has passed away. Mort and wife Isabelle joined POS in 1972 and were remarkably regular attendees of meetings, be they at St Marks in Palo Alto, Burgess Park in Menlo Park, the Garden Center in San Mateo ... they followed us everywhere! Isabelle brought refreshment goodies in most months of twenty-five years, while Mort carried in orchid plants in bloom for the show and tell table.

They were more often than not enormous plants. Mort was in charge of the growing, and he did not willingly divide or make plants smaller, so if they survived, they only got bigger. Nor was Mort shy about awkwardly big growers in the first place, such as Angraecums. Their greenhouse was a redwood one, adjacent to the house, and quite low-tech. One entered at risk of strangulation from the various extension cords and plant hangers ... you were welcome to a look-see, but were warned! Ever mindful of the law that we rise in organizations to a level beyond our competence, Mort was very careful to decline the honors of nomination to the POS board, officership and any other fixed duty. He did however help those in charge at most POS functions, shows, plant sales and demonstrations, in the years when POS had them.

His interests were not so much the growing and showing of orchids in bloom, but in species, and in bringing them back alive from travels abroad. Mort made use of his connections with the airline industry to put together package tours, on which some of us had traveled. His most recent interest was the Malagasy, and when his traveling days were curtailed, he continued to order plants from that country. Visiting Mort in the past year had become an awkward thing, so that few of us were able to keep up with his declining condition, and his passing last month came as a surprise to all. Our sympathy is extended to Isabelle and family.

*Another sad note: Long time associate member, and recent faithful meeting attendee, Winston Chung-Jacobsen passed away recently at the age of 13. Most of Amy and Ken's AOS awarded orchids have the clonal name 'Winston', named for their Cavalier King Charles spaniel. Winston acquired Amy and Ken when he was only a puppy.*



*As Winston's health declined he went everywhere with Amy and Ken, attending our show last January and many of our meetings. Our condolences to Amy and Ken on their loss.*

## BROOKSIDE ORCHIDS

IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE ITS

## OPEN HOUSE

AND EVERYONE IS INVITED!

**SATURDAY, NOV 12th FROM 9AM – 4 PM**

TOURS OF OUR FACILITIES POTTING DEMONSTRATIONS

A WIDE SELECTION OF BLOOMING ORCHIDS (OF COURSE!)

SPECIAL PLANT SALES  
DIVISIONS  
SEEDLINGS  
MERISTEMS

NEW ZEALAND BARK  
NEW ZEALAND MOSS  
PLASTIC AND CLAY POTS  
FERTILIZER

GIFT PLANTS IN DECORATIVE POTS

HEAD INTO THE HOLIDAYS AND TAKE A 10% DISCOUNT WITH YOU\*

\*(for purchases over \$20.00: valid on the day of the Open House only)

650-854-3711

2720 Alpine Rd, Menlo Park, CA 94028

(Just off 280 above the Webb Ranch Farm stand)

LINK TO MAP:

[http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&q=Brookside  
%20Orchids&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&tab=w](http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&q=Brookside%20Orchids&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&tab=w)

**Out and About: San Francisco Orchid Society September Meeting**



When I learned that Roy Tokunaga would be speaking at the SFOS, I decided it was time to finally visit one of their meetings. And take advantage of the chance to pre-order plants from Roy to pick up at the meeting. I have always been put off by the drive, but I found a ride from the East Bay with Fred Shull driving and Trudy Hadler along for AOS judging .



SFOS meetings take place in the San Francisco County Fair Building (Hall of Flowers) at 9th Ave. and Lincoln Way. The room they meet in is very large. Like POS, their Show & Tell table is presented by orchid experts - in fact some of the same experts that perform that service for us at POS meetings. They have two light sources, one at each end of the table, set up to show the true brilliant colors of the flowers. As the experts talk about each plant, they have an assistant to hold that plant up to the light. The orchids on the Show & Tell table were fabulous.

Some of the members are also members of POS, several members live north of San Francisco and show up at our meetings as featured speakers. They have AOS judging available at each of their meetings. It was an interesting and fun experience.



CW from above: Fabulous specimen sized *Dendrobium cuttbertsonii* - Steve Beckendorf; *Bulbophyllum phalaenopsis* - Judy Carney; a *Bulbophyllum*; *Odontoglossum* - Chris Mende; a *Psychopsis* (now *Oncidium*); early *Cymbidium*.



---

**AOS CORNER**

Now that Summer is behind us, let's hope the weather calms down so we can all enjoy the upcoming orchid show season. Some of our affiliated societies are starting to hold their meetings again after a summer hiatus. The AOS has had a busy summer as well. There are new intermediate culture sheets for most of the more popular orchids. If you are a member of AOS and have not already registered for access to the new website Members' Only, I hope you do it soon. One major difference in the new website is that it may be translated into a multitude of foreign languages. The translation is done with a drop down menu on the left hand top portion of the site. Also, the site is continually being populated with up-to-date orchid information. In addition, there is a new member's profile where you can renew your membership, change your mailing address or email information and manage your AQ+ subscription. Plus, each month, Ron McHatton produces a fabulous electronic newsletter filled with all kinds of orchid culture information. If you are already an AOS member and not receiving notifications of these monthly newsletters, AOS does not have your email address. To be added to the distribution list, send your email address along with your full name to Terri Rivera at [trivera@aos.org](mailto:trivera@aos.org). Please note: if you are having difficulties signing into the 'Members Only' section, it may be that your prior registration is no longer valid. With the new website, each member must renew their registration. Instructions for doing so are on the home page of AOS.

You will also find a tab on the home page about the Myrtle Head Savanna Conservation Committee project. It is up and running and donations are being made. You can read more about this joint project with Nature Conservancy in the August Orchids as well as the website. If you or your society has funds for conservation, please consider this worthwhile project. It certainly deserves all our support and it would be great if AOS could reach its monetary goal soon. If you are unable to make an online donation on the AOS webpage, you may send a contribution by check to AOS. Just make sure to note on the check that it is for the Myrtle Head Savanna Project so you receive proper recognition.

All my arrangements for attending the AOS Fall Members' meeting in San Antonio are made. The Alamo Orchid Society has put together a wonderful meeting and I look forward to being there. It runs from October 25 - 30 and has a great line up of speakers and vendors. In addition to Trustee and Committee meetings, the traditional Affiliated Societies breakfast will be held and I hope to see some of you there. Check out the Alamo Orchid Society website at [www.alamoorchidsociety.com](http://www.alamoorchidsociety.com) for registration or more information.

Lynn Fuller, Chair

AOS Affiliated Societies Committee

---

Our society by-laws state that no one may hold any of the elective board positions for more than two years, with the exception of the treasurer. We find ourselves in the position of having two board members, Judy Evans and Janusz Warszawski, willing to continue in their positions, not having anyone else shown any interest in assuming those positions, but they have held their positions for 2 years now. This issue will be addressed at the October meeting. Please be prepared to vote on proposed by-law changes at the November Annual Meeting. The proposed changes will be presented at the October meeting. To review our current by-laws, see the January 2008 newsletter posted on the society website.

---

### Nominations for 2012 POS Board of Directors

It is that time of year again. In November we will hold our General Meeting and will vote for next year's board members. There are still more people needed to do the planning part of running the society, so if you are interested, please contact Mike Drilling. If you see someone already on the slate in a position you are interested in, do not hesitate to make your interest known. Everyone who has served this past year (or these past years) would be willing to step aside for another interested member.

The nominating committee is proposing the following slate of officers:

President Mike Drilling  
 Vice President Chaunie Langland  
 Treasurer Sharon Langan  
 Recording Secretary Mike Rector  
 Corresponding Secretary  
 Membership  
 Ways and Means Dan Williamson  
 Directors at Large: Joseph Kautz  
 2 more needed

### 2011 Board of Directors

*President:* Mike Drilling 650-692-8998      *Vice President:* unfilled  
*Treasurer:* Sharon Langan 650-365-7160      *Rec. Secretary:* Mike Rector 650-366-3401  
*Corr. Secretary:* Judy Evans 650-593-8625      *Membership CP:* Janusz Warszawski 650-964-0560  
*Ways & Means CP:* Dan Williamson 650-963-9403      *Director at Large:* Monica Irvin 650-921-4699  
*Director at Large:* Jon-Michael Irvin 650-921-4699      *Director at Large:* Chaunie Langland 510-494-8850

### Chairpersons

*AOS Rep:* Mary Gerritsen      *Librarian:* Rex Castell 650-576-4637  
*Refreshment Chairpersons:* Jon-Michael Irvin and Monica Irvin  
*Sheath Editor:* Chaunie Langland 510-494-8850 [the\\_sheath\\_editor@earthlink.net](mailto:the_sheath_editor@earthlink.net)  
*Sheath Snail Mail Co-ordinator:* Jackie Becker      *Accountant:* Sue Rose  
*Web Editors:* Fred Cox & Cordelia Wong      Society Mailing Address: P.O.Box 6894  
 Website address: <http://penorchidsoc.org>      San Mateo, CA 94403-6894

*Volunteer sign-up sheets for our  
January show will be available at  
the October and November  
meetings.*

*Please sign up to help POS have  
another great show!*

*Peninsula Orchid Society  
The Sheath  
Chaunie Langland, Editor  
878 Cashew Way  
Fremont, CA 94536*