



September 2008 Newsletter

Affiliations American Orchid Society The Orchid Digest	Proud Supporter of Alzheimer's Association of the Central Coast
President: Danny Stocks	Vice President: Eric Holenda
Secretary: Anne Bachmann	Treasurer: Christina Holenda
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Newsletter Editor: Chris Ehrler	

Our Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday September 18th at 7:30pm at the AG Fire Station at 140 Station Way. **NOTE THE DATE AND LOCATION CHANGE!** The speaker will be Peter Tobias. Peter Tobias first started growing orchids in Chicago in the early 1970s but his hobby "...really got out of control" when he moved to Encinitas, a coastal town just north of San Diego, in 1980. His collection is primarily species orchids, most of which are grown outdoors. In 1999 he visited the Atlantic Rainforest in Brazil. After that he started his own little rainforest, with the rain provided by hand, in his two large backyard avocado trees. Peter was a founding member of the San Diego County Orchid Society's Conservation Committee. The success of that endeavor in San Diego led to the idea that orchid lovers nationwide, and even internationally, might support an organization devoted to orchid habitat protection. In 2006 the Orchid Conservation Alliance received its 501(c)3 designation from the US government, allowing it to collect donations tax-free for orchid conservation purposes. In 2006 a \$10,000 fund raising drive was successful and the money was donated to Ecominga, an Ecuadoran orchid conservation foundation. In his talk, Peter will describe the current activities of the Orchid Conservation Alliance and it plans for future conservation projects. **There will be a speaker's dinner, at 5:15pm at the Quarterdeck prior to the meeting. Call Eric at 929-5749 to reserve a spot.**

The September treat fairies will be Cindy Gerwasa and Lena Kapp.

President's Message

Well the kids went back to school today that means fall is right around the corner. I used to look forward to summer. Now I look forward to winter. Orchids are in bloom and there are orchid shows to attend. This is going to be my third winter growing orchids. Every year so far I have gotten better at growing. My success is in a large part due to being a member of this club. Eric has done a great job lining up speakers. I take notes and try to do some of the things they say. I have discovered there is no right way to grow orchids just the way that works for you. Being a novice, however, I do not know what works for me until I have tried it. Yes I have killed about as many orchids as I have had live. Some of the ones I count as living are not really growing. The best way to get better at growing is not to exactly follow the speakers, but to talk to the members of the club. They live in the same climate as me and most of them have been growing orchids for many years. I

have no other reference about members in other orchid societies as this is the only club I have been a member of. But I have heard there are clubs that the members are very secretive about how they grow their orchids and they do not share their best secrets. It is all about competition and beating the other members in the club. The members of our club are not like that. They are more than willing to share all the information they have. I invite anyone who has questions about anything to do with orchids to come to a meeting and ask. Talk to me and I will point you to the right person to answer your questions. I have gotten to know most of the people in the club and many of them have gobs of general knowledge and also specialized knowledge in the area or species of orchids they enjoy most. The biggest drawback at our meeting is we have to be out of the Women's Club by 10pm. It seems we have so much to cover we are always rushing to get it all in. This leaves little time to socialize at the meetings. This month (August 30) we are to get together at Bob's. It is under the guise of helping him pull some weeds in his cymbidium nursery. In reality it is so we can get together and socialize. By the time this message gets out the weed pulling will be over. I hope everyone had a great time. Aloha, Danny

Don't forget membership dues are due. If you have not yet paid for 2008-2009, please pay the \$20 at the next meeting or send a check to the society's PO Box listed below.

August meeting summary (by Chris Ehrler)

Our August speaker was Peggy Bozem's nephew Dexter Friede of Grow More fertilizers. They are a family owned business that offers over 50 retail products, and does business in 35 countries. They started in business in 1918 as Chemical Specialty Company looking at how to improve nutrient supply in plants. In 1976 they started manufacturing fertilizers based on alkaline western soils which are different from the more acidic soils on the east coast. Their fertilizers for orchids are all water soluble and contain micronutrients. He talked about the three main sources of nitrogen (required for good growth) and mentioned that some folks like orchid fertilizers that contain urea as a nitrogen source and others do not like. Urea is best in warm weather and in cool weather will not work well until the temperature warms up. Phosphorus helps root growth and is important for cool weather periods. He suggested that once your orchid begins growing a spike that you should use a fertilizer with a low nitrogen value.

Potassium is good for overall plant strength and helps your blooms last longer and aids in more colorful blooms.

Dexter supplied a large number of different products for the opportunity table and raffle tickets sold well. He suggested that if your orchids (or any plan) looks stressed that you should decrease the use of fertilizers and possibly send a leaf into to laboratory to determine what possible mineral deficiencies that plant might be experiencing. (Chris suggests bringing the orchid to the next meeting and ask for advice from someone that has been growing in our area for awhile. It's cheaper that the cost of the lab.) Their soluble fertilizers are designed so that when added to water they will bring our alkaline water to a pH of about 6.8 (if you do not know what pH stands for please ask me at the next meeting). He suggested that besides fertilizing the potting media you should also consider spraying the foliage with a fertilizer solution as it is important way orchids pick up nutrients.

Grow More is also known for their liquid seaweed extract. Dexter suggested you use it at the rate of 1 teaspoon per gallon of water as both the foliage and media. You can injury your orchids if you use over 1 tablespoon per gallon. H said it is good to use on newly transplants orchids and also seedling.

If you want more info on their large number of products for both orchids and general plant care see their website at [www. Growmore.com](http://www.Growmore.com). Their products can be purchased locally at Miner's Hardware and Farm Supply. Dexter

suggested that if you want a particular product that they do not have to ask if they can start carrying it.

WEED-WACKIN POTLUCK PARTY REPORT

The week-wackin potluck party at Bob Asbell's orchid nursery was a huge success and loads of fun (not for the weeds though). We had a great time visiting together and sharing our knowledge of some tried and true ways to get rid of bugs and ants than bug our orchids while we plucked weeds out of the orchid pots. The food at the potluck was outstanding, abundant and delicious – and wow, what a spread!

Bob is very grateful for the help we gave him and said it exceeded any expectation he had for this event. I think he was stunned at the amount of progress we made, how fast we worked and the amount of difference it made. Because we made such a big difference in just one day's time, we are planning to continue our efforts a few more times so that weeds will become under control and much more manageable. **Save the date for the next Weed Wackin Potluck on Sat. Sept 27TH beginning at 9 AM.**

A big thank you to everyone who helped today: Dorothy urhan, Ali and Alfred Look, Alice Swope, Bonnie Werring , Laurie & Larry Vierheilig , Eric Holenda, Barb Walsh, Chris Ehrler, Linda Hauss, Linda Kipe, Peggy and Ted Bozem, Judy and Chuck Scheithauer, Linda Kipe, Rosemary Bradshaw, Ardith Knadler, Bruce Brown and Dottie Reed.

Orchid Calendar

Dates	Event	Location	Comments
Thursday, August 18 , 7:30pm	FCOS Monthly Meeting	AG Fire Station, 140 Traffic Way, Arroyo Grande	Peter Tobias will be speaking on the current activities of the Orchid Conservation Alliance and it plans for future conservation projects.
September 13 – 14, 2008	Sacramento Orchid Forum Show	Shepard Garden and Art Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, CA	For more info contact Jeff Tyler, 5520 Fruitridge Rd., Sacramento, CA 95820; (916) 455-4292
October 3 – 5, 2008	San Diego International Orchid Fair	Quail Botanical Gardens, 230 Quail Garden Dr., Encinitas, CA	For more info contact Jamie Werner, (760) 943-2333, jamie@szpr.com
October 16 – 19, 2008	Southland Orchid Show	Huntington Botanical Gardens, 11511 Oxford Rd., San Marino, CA.	For more info contact Robert Lauri, 4290 Van Dyke Pl., San Diego, CA 92116; (619) 742-0741; bklauri@yahoo.com
October 25, 2008	Third Annual CVOS Orchid Expo & Sale	Grossman Gallery at the Lompoc Library	More info on this event in future newsletters
November 1 – 2, 2008	Santa Barbara Orchid Estates Fall Open House	Santa Barbara Orchid Estate	http://www.sborchid.com/events.php
November 22 - 23, 2008	Orchid Society of Santa Barbara Fall Show	Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History	This year's theme is "Galaxies of Orchids".