

Tucson Orchid Society Newsletter

February 2016

Monthly Meeting: Wednesday, February 17, 7:30 PM

Featured Speaker: Ron Parsons

“Adventures in Southeastern Australia”



The February program will feature Ron Parsons, a **world-class photographer** from San Francisco. Here is his description of the program:

“For five weeks of the austral spring of 2011, from early October to mid-early November, I traveled through **southeastern Australia**. My trip started on the island state of Tasmania (the north and northwest part) where friends took me out to see and photograph orchids I would not have found on my own. From there I traveled to Victoria where I was taken to Grampians National Park in the west, the Anglesea Peninsula west of Melbourne, and Wilson’s Promontory to the southeast of Melbourne, where again many exciting orchids were found. Next stop was Canberra for a few days, then to areas both north and south of Sydney in New South

Wales where many fantastic ground, lithophytic and epiphytic orchids were seen. My incredible trip ended with several days spent on the beautiful isle of Bruny Island, southeast of the capitol of Hobart, an island off an island off an island!”

Ron is considered by many to be one of the finest flower photographers in the United States. His photography and **encyclopedic knowledge of orchids** is known both nationally and internationally. He has been photographing orchids, wildflowers, and almost every other kind of plant for over 25 years, and he has taken thousands of photos of orchids, wildflowers and other rare plants. Visit Ron's Picasa photography site for a more complete collection.

Ron Parsons has been growing orchids for **more than 40 years**, and has been interested in species orchids for most of that time. Ron loves to photograph orchids and most other flowers whenever he can, whether it be on trips to see them in nature or in collections. He loves to travel to see orchids in the wild, and does so as often as possible. Ron has close to 60,000 digital images, most of which are of orchids, and still retains a slide library that exceeds 100,000 botanical images. He has at least 3000 published photos that have appeared in magazines, periodicals, journals and books. Ron has co-authored three botanical books, all with Mary E. Gerritsen. The first two, published by Timber Press, are *Masdevallias*, *Gems of the Orchid World* and *Calochortus, Mariposa Lilies and their Relatives*.

Most recently, the third book, a large, luxurious, two-volume set, *A Compendium of Miniature Orchid Species* was published by Redfern Natural History Productions in January of 2014. The latter has nearly 1200 pages, 1800 photographs, and features more than 500 species.



President's Corner

Happy Valentine's Day!

I hope everyone's plants survived the cold. I am ready for Spring and flowers.

Our first **outreach workshop** in 2016 was successful with several folks stopping to check us out. Sid demonstrated how to repot an orchid from a big box store and a woman brought by a well grown orchid for an evaluation. We had lots of volunteers show up to help. Thanks Dianne, Marie, Jim W., Jim S., Sid, Bill, Doug and Dianne's husband Andy. There is something really fun about hanging out with orchid people and sharing our experience with newbies. We are planning our second outreach workshop at the March Show!

The first weekend in March is our annual **Fiesta de las Flores orchid show** at Mesquite Valley Growers. If you like orchids, this is the place



to be! We have orchid displays, ribbon judging, plants for sale, an education display, and an orchid workshop. We also have a society display for well grown orchids in bloom. I hope that everyone will find ways to get involved. There are so many things to do from setup to pricing plants to helping at the outreach table to helping judge orchids. This is also the time to **create your own** (or shared) display. People love to see the creative ways that we can show off our plants. Displays can be big or small or shared by

several people. Baskets are a wonderful way to show off a collection. If you want help or ideas for a display don't hesitate to ask one of our members. A great display doesn't require a lot of plants. The show is also a wonderful way to share our love of orchids with visitors. How many people joined an orchid society because of an orchid show? We will have lots of people coming to see our flowers so let's not disappoint them!

Two people have signed up for **greenhouse tours**. Marie Hirsch is going to show us how she grows plants on a windowsill in May. Hopefully her adeniums will be in bloom. Mike Barretti has also volunteered to host a tour again this year. Please consider sharing your growing setup with fellow orchid enthusiasts. Our show-and-tell tables are wonderful but seeing plants growing in someone's home, yard, or windowsill provides us with first-hand education on growing in the desert.

Judy Forester

Orchid Problem Corner

Look for the orchid problem corner at our monthly meetings. You can bring in an orchid that is a problem plant for others to comment on. It may be an identification problem, bugs, culture or some mysterious issue. If you have a buggy plant, please bring it in a bag so as not to spread pests. By having a designated area I am hoping that comments regarding treatment etc can be made before the meeting, during the break or afterwards.



Show and Tell

Please bring your orchids that are in bloom to show off! It's nice to share your pretties with everyone and talk about what works and doesn't work for you. Get tips from others to help your orchids grow better.



Orchid of the month

Mark Dimmitt

Dendrobium anosmum (*superbum*) is one of the showiest orchids, and among the easiest to grow and flower. This epiphyte has pendant **leafy canes that can grow up to six feet long** in a season. The following spring the canes bear two flowers at each leaf node on the outer $\frac{3}{4}$ of the canes. The result is a foxtail of a hundred or more flowers per cane. The **intense fragrance** is described by some as that of raspberries or rhubarb, and it permeates the whole greenhouse. A large plant can have a dozen canes, creating a major spectacle.

This species is fairly widespread in the lowlands of tropical Asia, and can be grown under **intermediate to warm conditions**. The canes grow from spring through fall, when the plants should be watered and fed generously. Growth stops in late November or December. If you stop watering by Christmas, the leaves will fall off. With continued watering, the leaves remain green, but the plants flower either way. I prefer to let them go deciduous,

because the flowers are more visible on naked canes. Some sources say that night-time temperatures above 60 F in winter will inhibit flowering. My greenhouse is kept at 55-60 in winter, and these plants flower reliably.

Grow *D. anosmum* in any well-drained but moisture-retentive medium. They can be grown in hanging pots, but new canes begin growing upwards, then tend to break when they become heavy. It's preferable to grow them **mounted sideways on a slab**. I place a big blob of medium on the slab, cover it with a thin layer of sphagnum and then a sheet of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch plastic mesh to hold it in place. Lastly, I tie a keiki or division over the mesh. A plant can remain on a big slab for several years. As plants grow larger and crowd the medium with roots, new canes will begin to grow less long, signaling time to start over.

Flowered canes will not flower or grow again. But they remain succulent and will nourish new canes for two or three years, and may produce keikis that are an easy way to start new plants.



The preferred species name “*anosmum*” means lacking fragrance, which is of course a serious error. I **prefer the epithet “*superbum*”**, and I hope the name will be changed back to it. The photos are of *D. anosmum* var. *giganteum*, which has larger flowers and especially wider lips than the typical form.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL *Annual Dues*

If you haven't paid your dues yet, please do so. They remain the same at \$12 per year. All members with email should have gotten a reminder recently. If you have not already paid for this new year you can bring cash or **check to our next meeting**. For those folks who cannot attend the meeting, you may mail your check to the Treasurer, Jim Wilcoxon, 9662 E Hickory Tree Place, Tucson, AZ 85749.

Education Corner by Marie Hirsch and Doug Forester

What Does That Orchid Word Mean?

Broughtonia (brow-TOH-nee-a)

This is a monotypic genus of attractive epiphytic orchids from the Island of Jamaica. It is related to *Laelia* and *Cattleya* orchids. It was first described by Dr. Robert Brown of “Brownian motion” fame in 1813. He dedicated it to Arthur Broughton, an English botanist that worked in Jamaica in the early 19th century.

monotypic (mon-o-TIP-ik)

Having only one type, as a genus with only one species.



Sobralia (so-BRAL-ee-a)

A distinctive genus of terrestrial and lithophytic orchids from Mexico, Central and South America. The plant is characterized by its reed-like stems, plicate leaves and cattleya-like flowers. It was found in 1794 by Ruiz and Pavon and named in honor of the Spanish physician, Dr. Francisco Sobral.

lithophyte or lithophytic (lith-o-fit-ik)

Plants that grow on rocks but derive their nourishment from the atmosphere and from accumulated humus.

plicate (plye-CATE)

Plant leaves are folded like a fan or pleated.

Fiesta de las Flores Wes Addison

This is the 20th anniversary of the Fiesta de las Flores and it will be held at Mesquite Valley Growers, 8005 E. Speedway. **Setup will be on Friday, March 4, 2016 starting at 2 PM.** Setup is actually one of the most, if not the most, fun part of the show. If you have display materials you can drive up to the greenhouse by taking the second or third driveway on the street bordering the east side of the nursery. For those of you not putting in a display you can park in the regular parking lot on Speedway or on the street on the east side of the nursery. We will **need help** in building the Society exhibit display, in unpacking and pricing the sales plants, assisting other members in setting up their displays and in wrapping sales and display tables. We can find a job for anyone who shows up. It really is fun.



On **Saturday** the nursery opens by 7:30 and closes at 5. Coffee and bagels will be provided. You can help with the sales tables, setting up the education display, helping guests who are looking for plants or general information and ribbon judging at 9. **Ribbon judging** is run by Jim Wilcoxon. Normally we split into three groups and Jim will assign each group to judge certain genera of plants. You need no



formal training just an appreciation for beautiful flowers. The ribbon judging is based on your personal preferences. It's a lot of fun and you can learn a lot by helping and listening to the various discussion on flower quality. But always keep in mind that the ribbons are given based on what you like. Saturday is a busy day and help is always needed.

On **Sunday** the nursery opens at 8. Normally there is very little activity until 11 or later. So if you can help, think about coming later. Sunday is usually slower than Saturday and the main

activities are selling the remaining plants and talking to guests about orchids. **Take down** will commence around 3:30 to 4 depending on the number of guests still filtering in. Take down is much faster and is usually accomplished in an hour at the most.

Remember that you can **sell your extra plants** or ones you want to get rid of. The Society takes a 15% commission on the sales.

The success of our show is dependent on the time and effort that each of us contributes to the show. A few years back I took an informal vote on whether we should continue having the show and the consensus was that we wanted to continue. The decision had nothing to do with raising money. It was all about **having a fun time**, being able to see members' plants, and trying to get new members. Personally I look forward to the show and I hope that all of you also do. See you on Friday the 4th.

Calendar of Events

Feb 17 meeting - Ron Parsons

Mar 4 at 2 PM - Setup for the orchid show at Mesquite Valley Growers

Mar 5-6 – 20th Annual Fiesta de las Flores at Mesquite Valley Growers, 8005 E Speedway, Tucson

Mar 16 meeting - Thomas Mirenda

April 2-3 - [Desert Valley Orchid Society Show](#), Harper's Landscape Co., 2529 N. Hayden Rd, Scottsdale, AZ. This small show is well worth the drive.

April 11 – [Annual Master Gardener Spring Plant Sale](#), 8AM-11AM 4210 N Campbell, Tucson

May 21 - Marie Hirsch greenhouse tour

Cookie List

Be sure to **sign up** at the meeting to bring cookies to a monthly meeting. Pick a month, sign your name, and plan to bring something nice to share.

Feb 17, 2016	Sheri Musil	Aug 17, 2016	
Mar 16, 2016	Judy Forester	Sep 21, 2016	David Ingram
Apr 20, 2016	Barb Gores	Oct 19, 2016	
May 18, 2016	Marie Hirsch	Nov 2, 2016	
Jun 15, 2016	Billie Kramer	Jan 18, 2017	
Jul 20, 2016			

Future Greenhouse Open Houses There are two greenhouse tours currently scheduled. Please **let the President know** if you are interested in showing off your orchids and how you grow them to members of the Society. Traditionally, tours run from April through September. Whether you grow on a windowsill, patio, yard, or greenhouse, other growers can discover new ideas and suggestions for improving their growing.

General Meeting Information

The Tucson Orchid Society regularly meets on the **third Wednesday** in January through October. Members are encouraged to bring orchids in bloom for **show and tell**. In November, the Society holds a fundraising **auction** of plants donated for that purpose. In December, we have a wonderful, relaxing **potluck** with a greenhouse tour, combined with a short business meeting and election of officers.

The monthly meetings are held at the [Gem & Mineral Society Building](#) (Adobe Bridge Club entrance), 3727 E. Blacklidge Dr., Tucson, AZ 85716 at 7:30 PM. From the intersection of East Ft. Lowell and North Dodge, go two blocks south on Dodge, turn left on Blacklidge. The building is on the north side of the street.

The Newsletter The newsletter is published every month of the year. If you have something you would like to have published in the newsletter that is of general interest, don't hesitate to contact the newsletter editor, Doug Forester. The deadline is two weeks prior to the monthly meeting.

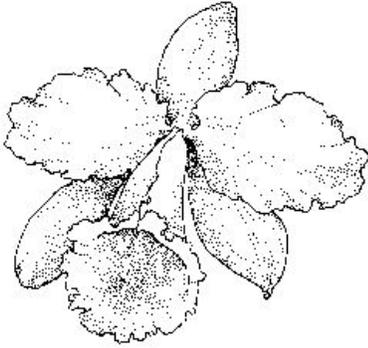
TOS Officers

President	Judy Forester	judyf.ccn@comcast.net
Vice-President	Dianne Turausky	dturausky@comcast.net
Treasurer	Jim Wilcoxon	jfw@theriver.com
Past President	Mike Barretti	mbarretti@msn.com
Media/Membership	Doug Forester	dougf.ccn@comcast.net
Program Chair	Wes Addison	wesadd@cpatucson.com
Show Chair	Wes Addison	
Auction Chair	Mike Barretti	

Social Media

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TucsonOrchidSociety

Website: www.orchidsocietytucson.org



Tucson Orchid Society

Meets the third Wednesday of each month
7:30 p.m.

Gem & Mineral Society Building (Adobe Bridge Club entrance)
3727 E. Blacklidge Rd.

Visitors and new members are always welcome

Visit us on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/TucsonOrchidSociety

Visit our website: www.orchidsocietytucson.org

Yes, I would like to join the Tucson Orchid Society. Yearly membership dues are \$12.00

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email address _____

May we email you the newsletter? _____

Today's date _____

Bring this to the monthly meeting or mail with your check to:

Tucson Orchid Society
%Jim Wilcox
9662 E Hickory Tree Place
Tucson, AZ 85749