



Oncidium Kukoo

# New Mexico Orchid Guild Newsletter February 2017

Our next regular meeting will be:

**February 12th at 1:30pm**

Albuquerque Garden Center, 10120 Lomas  
Blvd NE

*(Just West of Eubank on the South Side of  
Lomas in Los Altos Park)*

As usual, please bring something to share.

Cakes, cookies, and other snacks are  
appreciated

Members are encouraged to wear their  
Membership Badges



**Our program will be  
"Oncidiums, how to  
successfully grow  
them in ABQ**

## From the President's Desk:

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February 2017

While not as many plants changed homes at our January plant exchange as in the past there were still enough plants for everyone.

Our **February 12<sup>th</sup>** meeting topic will be “Oncidiums, how to successfully grow them in Albuquerque. Oncidium seedlings will be available to purchase a nominal charge with an appropriate media and pot. In addition to our seedling repotting and program there will be plants from Orchidworks in Hilo for your shopping pleasure.

Be sure to save the date **March 12<sup>th</sup>**. We are pleased to announce that Tom Mirenda will be our speaker. Tom Mirenda has been the Orchid Collection Specialist at the Smithsonian Institution for the last 10 years. He cares for and curates an extremely diverse collection of orchid species and hybrids from all over the world. His position includes developing and producing huge educational exhibits using the collection plants that last up to 4 months and are visited by hundreds of thousands of visitors. Trained originally as a Marine Biologist, Tom made the switch to plants and orchids in his late 20s while living in Hawaii. Since then he has worked with orchids at NY Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Botanic Garden and an extensive private collection at Greentree Estate in Long Island.

Tom was also the floor manager at the New York International orchid Show for many years during this period. For the last 6 years, Tom has contributed two columns each month for Orchids magazine and is developing a new book based on those writings. Tom travels frequently around the U.S. and internationally, making presentations to diverse audiences, from scientists to the general public, about orchid ecology, pollination biology, strategies for orchid conservation. He is passionate about seeking collaboration between the worlds of Botanic Gardens, the hobbyist community, commercial growers and scientists to work together toward the goal of protecting orchids and their habitats. Tom will be speaking on the orchid innovations of Taiwan.

We are still seeking a publicity chairperson for the May show. If interested, please contact any board member.

NMOG welcomes our newest members, Cassie and Alex Mayes. Please seek them out, introduce yourself and make them welcome.

Remember your dues are due ! You may pay Ed at the meeting or mail them to our PO Box 26473, Albuquerque, NM 87125-6473  
Please fill out a membership form even if there are no changes. The form is available to download from our website.

See you on the 12<sup>th</sup>  
Keith

NMOG Website: <http://www.nmorchidguild.org/>

American Orchid Society Website: <http://aos.org>

## January Show and Tell Winners

Photos taken by Sean Houtman



Advanced Division--First Place  
Jane Cole  
*Dendrobium kingianum* King Zip 'Red Splash'



Advanced Division-- Second Place

Susan Yamamoto

Fdk after dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids'



Advanced Division-- Third Place Tie

Judith Richey

Oncidium Tsiku Marguerite



Advanced Division-- Third Place Tie  
Kelly McCracken  
Slc. Numaza Star



Intermediate Division-- First Place

Lisa Woromay Villanueva  
Slc. Fire Magic 'Solar Flare'



Intermediate Division-- Second Place

Alyssa Christy Kolski  
Phrag. Eric Young 'Orange Glow'



Novice Division--First Place  
Matthew Polmanter  
Phal. Mukalla

### SHOW SHOPPING IN HILO



Denise from Kalapana Tropical  
with some old guy.



Kalapana Greenhouse.  
They will supply plants for our show and sale.



Lehua Orchids Greenhouse



Two old white guys. One of  
whom is Graham Wood of Lehua  
Orchids. They will supply paphs  
for our sale



Paph Petula's Sensation

# People almost wiped out orchids in South Florida. Now the beloved plants are making a comeback.

BY JOEY FLECHAS

[jflechas@miamiherald.com](mailto:jflechas@miamiherald.com)

The 30,000 orchids now growing in some Miami-Dade cities began their lives as tiny dust-like seedlings in glass bottles, specks of hope that have grown into a promising start to bringing back rare and endangered species of orchids that were once abundant in South Florida.

Since the beginning of the Million Orchid Project in 2014, a push to reintroduce the colorful plants into Miami-Dade's urban landscape, the plants have been transplanted along public streets in Coral Gables, Palmetto Bay, Cutler Bay and even seaside Bal Harbour. Working for the love of the green thumb, an army of volunteers, high school students and researchers have nurtured the seedlings into five-inch plants that are now attached to trees and growing in the ground.

Consider it an all-out orchid blitz.

"This is massive," said Jason Downing, the orchid biologist at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden who is leading the charge. "This is a big outreach, citizen science project."

Taking the science of orchids to the people is a major facet of the project, which started with a goal of planting a million orchids in five years. The project won't meet that goal, but the expectation is that there will be a foundation for orchids to spread exponentially on their own in the next few decades. The key is volume — to plant so many orchids that neither nature nor humans can hinder the growth. Over time, the wind will carry seedlings along and leave them in new places to thrive.

Fairchild officials say they are committed for the long haul. "It's really as long as it takes," said Amy Padolf, director of education at the garden.

The reality is the return of the orchid is a long-term deal. It takes time to prepare for planting outside a greenhouse in a public space, and there has been some trial and error. At some sites, more than 90 percent of the orchids have survived so far. In other spots, fewer than 10 percent have made it.

"This project is a living experiment," Downing said. "We're adapting our protocols based on what works and what doesn't work."

Adaptation is key in what Downing said makes this experiment unique — the large-scale reintroduction of native orchids to a dense and complicated urban environment. The focus has been mostly on cities and their built-up neighborhoods, and more communities are on deck to join the effort this year.

Downing met with Miami Beach's arborist this week to scout sites for planting. Doral, West Kendall, Brickell Key and South Miami will also get orchids this year.

"It's going like a house on fire," said Martin Motes, a research associate at Fairchild and owner of Motes Orchids in Redland. "We're making a big comeback."

Funding and other support for that comeback is coming from multiple entities including Fairchild, the American Orchid Society, grants and cities that pay to participate.

South Florida was once lush with wild orchids growing on oak and mahogany trees, but the orchid population was devastated by unchecked harvesting and habitat loss. As development squeezed orchid habitat, people ripped the plants out of trees and shipped them up north to sell as cheap house plants.

It was a far cry from the love and respect orchid enthusiasts have for the plant.

Among the newly initiated: Miami-Dade students. Last year, Fairchild sponsored a program in which several hundred middle and high schoolers helped grow orchids in labs.

This year, more students will be able to participate after the school system donated a decommissioned bus to Fairchild and University of Miami design students built a fully functional lab inside it.

Budding orchid lovers from more than 40 high schools will now have the experiment come to them in the bus, dubbed the mobile STEMLab. The teens will be conducting crucial research. They'll test different growing environments and collect data that will help researchers understand how to best promote the orchid growth. Then the students get to plant the orchids at their schools.

"In around 15 to 20 years, around all these schools, orchids will be growing on their own like they used to," Downing said.

The project is bringing back endangered native orchids such as the Butterfly Orchid (*Encyclia tampensis*), Pine Pink (*Bletia purpurea*) and the Florida Dancing Lady (*Tolumnia bahamensis*). Another very rare and difficult-to-grow species, the Florida Cowhorn (*Cyrtopodium punctatum*), has also been planted in a few areas. More species will be introduced this year.



Working with Florida International University, Fairchild will soon release a mobile application that will allow volunteers in the field to assist in data collection. As citizen scientists, they'll be able to take photographs and note the condition of planted orchids. So far, the orchid project has been a massive team effort. Anyone interested in getting trained and volunteering can learn more at [fairchildgarden.org](http://fairchildgarden.org)

Thanks to Kelly McCracken for contributing this article.

## Classifieds

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Email [Kelly@dunnassoc.net](mailto:Kelly@dunnassoc.net) to list orchids for sale or trade, orchid related items, or "In Search Of" posts



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