



Manitoba Orchid Society

For the Love of Orchids Newsletter

Next Meeting: 19 October 2008
Salle Académique, Rm. 1531
St-Boniface College,
196 De La Cathedrale Av.

Regular Programme: Annual Auction

Starts at 1:00 P.M. (note time is earlier than the usual meetings) with plants being accepted after 12:15 P.M. This year's proceedings of plant sales will again be split 30% for the club and 70% for the contributing member. This policy will be reviewed in future years, depending on the financial health of the club.

Ensure you have 2 tags in each pot, one with your name and the other with the name of the plant.

Plants must be sold through the auction only—no other selling of plants is permitted at the October meeting.

Only members in good standing (i.e. membership paid up) may buy or sell plants at the auction.

No Novice Program and no Show & Tell




Goodies will be provided by Barb Tagg, Darlene Stack, Fran Cass & Fernando Tan.

Website: <http://www.manitobaorchidsociety.ca>

Executive email: president@manitobaorchidsociety.ca

Newsletter email: newsletter@manitobaorchidsociety.ca

Submission deadline 23 October 2008 for November 2008 Issue

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| <p>Benefits of Membership</p> | <p>Manitoba Orchid Society members now receive the following discounts: 15% at Schriemer Nurseries, 15% at Village Garden Center, 10% at La Coste Nursery & 10% at Shelmerdine Nurseries, upon presentation of valid membership cards.</p> |
|  | <p>October 19 Annual Auction—no novice meeting—starts at 1:00 P.M.</p> <p>November 16 General & Novice Meetings</p> <p>December 14 Christmas Potluck</p> |
| <p>For sale!</p> | <p>Kimberly is downsizing "Big Time". Great plants at bargain prices. Paphs, Miltoniopsis, Cymbidiums, Dendrobiums in 1 gal. pots with many growths. Many more orchids. She also has virus-testing kits. Price is 10.00 each.</p> <p>Call her at 632-6177 for further details.</p> |
| <p>Hearts & Flowers</p> | <p>If you hear of any good/bad news regarding members or their families, please call Morganne Jerome and let her know.</p> |
|  | <p>To Arturo Alejandro, Kevin Duerksen, Lilianne Foster, Horst Hack, Marianne Hack, Joyce Jaworski, Kyle Lucyk, Helen Toews & Garnet Ward for bringing flowering plants to the September Show & Tell.</p> |
|  | <p>The Executive encourages all members to provide feedback, comments, suggestions by filling out a comment sheet available from the Secretary at all General Meetings.</p> <p>All signed comment sheets should be returned to any member of the Executive. They will be reviewed at the next Executive Meeting and you will be informed of follow-up action taken.</p> |

2007/2008 Executive

Elected

President Dave Moran
 Past President Joyce Jaworski
 1st V.P. Kyle Lucyk
 2nd V.P./Show Chair Lorne Heshka
 Treasurer Garnet Ward
 Secretary Morganne Jerome

Appointed

Membership Gary Jaworski
 Social
 Public Relations
 Special Orders Jim Roy
 AOS/COC Rep Kevin Duerksen
 Library Lilianne Foster
 Newsletter Robert Parsons
 Web Master Robert Kato

***Epipactis helleborine* (Linnaeus) Cranz - Broad-leaved Helleborine**
The First Report of Occurrence in Manitoba
By Lorne Heshka

Epipactis helleborine is an "Old World" orchid species native to the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. In North America, this orchid prefers moist riverbanks and roadside ditches, but has naturalized in a variety of habitats including dry evergreen woods.

Blooming in July and August, the stem can reach 90 cms with up to 10 leaves distinctly resembling those of the Genus *Cypripedium*, and a one sided raceme of up to 50 flowers. The flowers are small 1 - 2.5 cm; lateral sepals are greenish, 1 - 1.5cm long, ovate-lanceolate, often suffused with purple; petals, are pale green, pink, purple, or yellowish, ovate, 1 - 1.5cm long; lip indistinctly veined, constricted at the middle into 2 parts, proximal part dark purplish to brownish, deeply concave. As a result of colour variability, 5 different colour forms have been named.

In 1879 this orchid was first discovered in North America near Syracuse, New York. It is unknown how this orchid found its way to this continent, but it is speculated that the seeds arrived with plants or personal belongings brought by the settlers. Since that time it has spread extensively through Eastern North America, with a scattering of populations in the west. The Flora of North America notes that in Canada; populations have been recorded from the provinces of British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Ontario and Quebec. Note the absence of Manitoba from this list.

While conducting a plant survey along the Seine River during the week of August 10, 2008, Paul Mutch, a Technical Assistant with the Naturalist Services Branch, City of Winnipeg; encountered an orchid that he was unable to identify. On August 18, he contacted the author by e-mail and requested assistance in identifying this orchid. Arrangements were made to meet at the site on August 20th and this unknown orchid (actually seven plants of this orchid) was identified as *Epipactis helleborine* forma *viridens*, the green flowered form of the Broad-leaved Helleborine. This is the first known record for this species in Manitoba.

An intriguing question is - "when and how did this orchid arrive at Winnipeg?" The seeds of orchids are known to travel in a number of different ways; the most common being by wind, by water, or in soil. Itasca County, Minnesota, the nearest recorded location for *Epipactis helleborine*, is several hundred kilometers to the southeast.

Now that this species has arrived in Manitoba, it will be interesting to track the spread of this species within our province over the next few years. You can assist in this project by reporting any and all plants of this species that you encounter. As you travel in and around Winnipeg and other areas of the province during late July and August, watch for this "vagabond" species. I would welcome your documented observations.

ORCHIDS FROM SEED

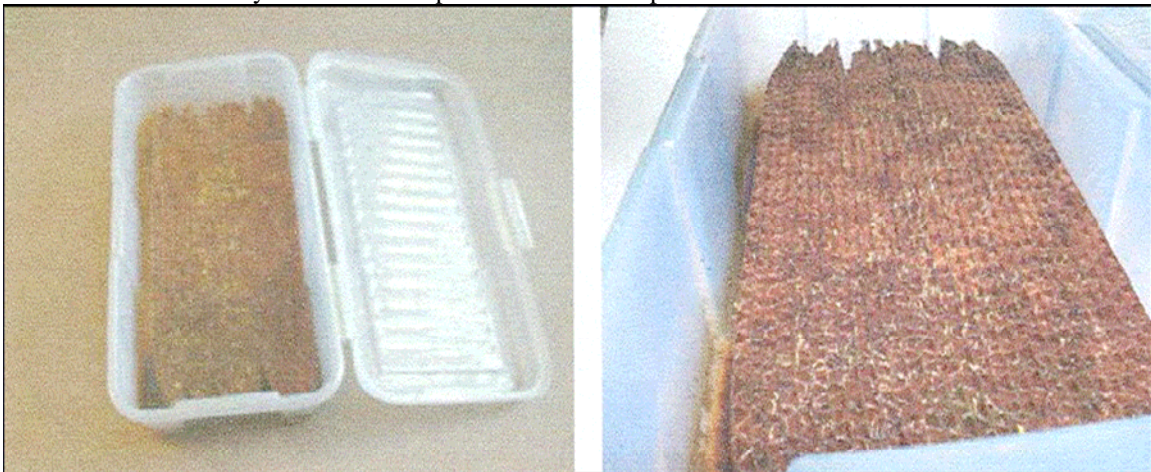
Talk by Mark Demers -*reported by Ian Gillam*

Orchids are highly successful plants that grow over much of the land surface of the earth, from the sub-arctic to tropical treetops and towards the limits of the southern continents. The great diversity of their flowers, from minute to large and showy, often with peculiar adaptations for fertilization, makes them fascinating subjects for growers and naturalists. The discovery that the spectacular flowered tropical epiphytic orchids could be cultivated in greenhouses in northerly latitudes led to an orchid mania in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Enormous numbers of plants were collected from the wild for shipment to Europe and North America. Unprincipled commercial collection damaged many populations, often beyond recovery.

Part of the problem lay in the slow growth of the plants. Propagation by division of cultivated plants simply could not satisfy demand and early attempts at growing from seed were unsuccessful. In nature, orchids generally seem to occupy rather restricted sites of suitable character, often scattered across wide areas. The family's solution to the problem of multiplication is to produce enormous numbers of seeds of very small size, easily scattered widely by wind. Orchid seeds represent the ultimate in miniaturization, containing little more than an embryo in a winged envelope. Devoid of the reserve of food usual in other seeds, these are unable to grow away without the assistance of an external food supply.

Investigation led to the discovery that orchid seeds only succeed when they become infected by a suitable fungus that supplies essential nutrients, at least until the plant reaches the stage of producing photosynthetic leaves. The earliest successful artificial growth of tropical orchid seeds was obtained by sowing them around the base of the parent plant, where suitable fungi occurred, though this was not recognized at the time. After a period small green seedlings appeared. This rather inefficient method led to the beginning of production of artificial hybrids. A 20th century innovation sowed the seeds onto an artificial medium containing sugar, minerals and other nutrients. Such media readily support the growth of numerous moulds and bacteria, so the medium must be prepared and kept under sterile conditions and the seeds must be free of contamination. Development of suitable media has been largely by methods that stress definition and reproducibility yet modern media typically add undefined natural supplements such as coconut milk or fruit juices to achieve optimal growth. These methods are now standard in culture of tropical epiphytic orchids and have moved them from the greenhouses of wealthy industrialists to make them widely available at modest cost.

Hardy terrestrial orchids are equally interesting to gardeners and naturalists. Their populations, too, have been damaged by commercial collection. Progress in propagation from seed has followed a similar path. Some have had success in sowing the seed outdoors, either in suitable natural areas or in prepared beds containing undefined natural fungi. Difficulties here lie in keeping the seedbed undisturbed yet free of weeds over the several years needed for plants to reach transplantable size.



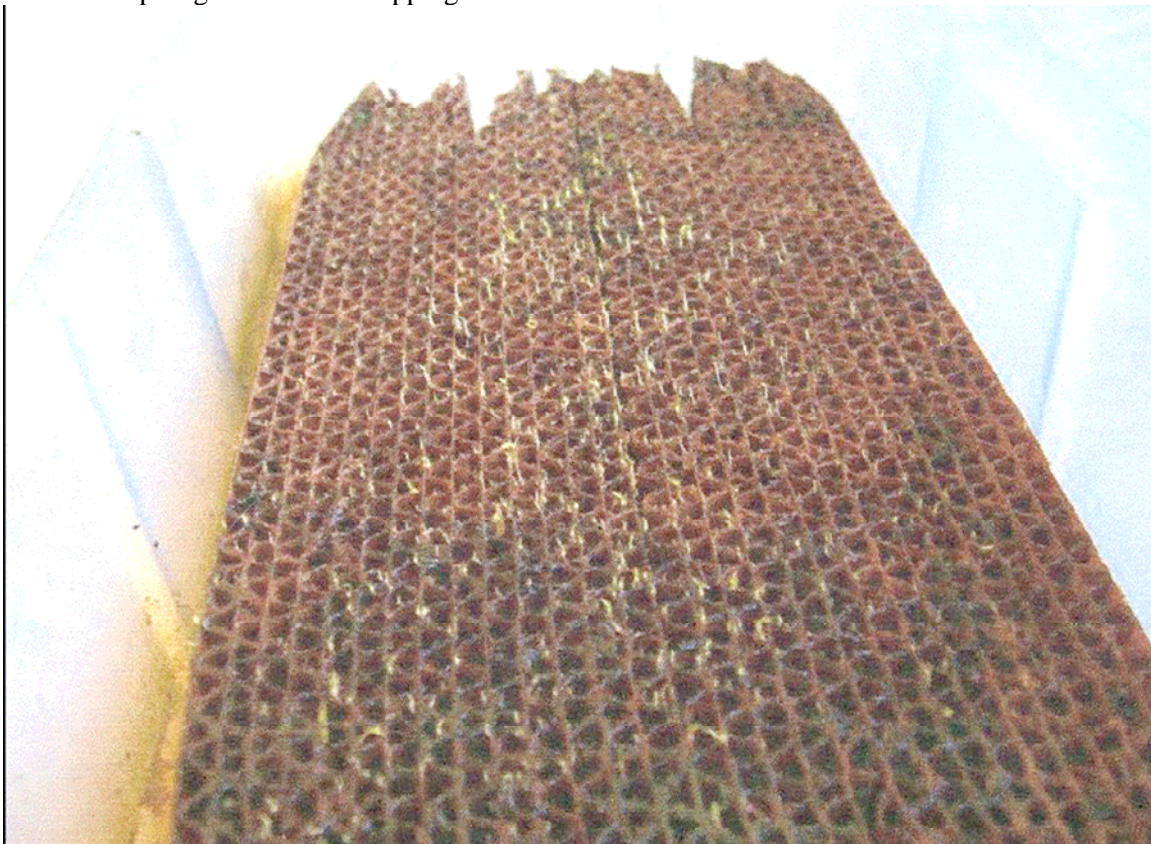
Storage box with soaked scratching post and at right seeded.

Growth on defined artificial media has been developed for some species. Hardy orchids grow slowly, often with pauses for dormancy, and transfer of the small seedlings from flasks to outdoor conditions can be difficult. *Cypripedium* species and hybrids raised in this way are available from a few enthusiasts in several countries.

An alternative approach has been explored particularly in Britain. There, the Hardy Orchid Society offers both seeds and cultures of suitable symbiotic fungi. Originally isolated from mature orchid plants, suitable fungal strains must not grow so vigorously as to overwhelm the developing seedlings in the culture medium. Approaches using nutrient media rely on laboratory techniques and equipment available only with some difficulty to determined experimenters but can be attempted in a kitchen or basement. Growers must expect to experience losses from contamination.

A simpler system more suited to the amateur grower has been developed recently in Japan. Information appears to be available to date only in the Japanese language and has been passed on to Mark Demers by Jason Nehring. At a recent AGC meeting Mark showed the encouraging early results of his experiments with this method. Importantly it eliminates the requirements for sterile medium and aseptic technique. The substrate for growth is cellulose infected by fungi that provide the germinating seeds with nutrients.

The recommended form of cellulose is rather thick corrugated cardboard available as a scratching block for the use of cats kept indoors. This is a softer and more absorbent grade, grey in colour and lacking the heavier card exterior of cardboard boxes. Thinner sheets of similar cardboard used to wrap fragile items for shipping would doubtless suffice.



Showing tiny *Bletilla* seedlings on Scratching Post

The nutrient solution and fungal inoculum is simply "compost tea", that is the liquid leaching out of a bag of garden compost left soaking in water overnight or longer. (It may be desirable to use water that has either been boiled and cooled or left to stand overnight to reduce the chlorine content.) Cardboard is saturated with the solution and then stood upright in a further supply of "tea" in a translucent plastic storage container capable of being closed fairly tightly. The seeds are sown over the substrate reasonably thinly and the lid closed on the container. Mark left his incubator under the bench in his alpine house (out of direct sunlight) over the winter and through the following summer.

By the end of summer the cardboard supported numerous tiny green plants, of *Bletilla* in the example he showed. It was that simple, and apparently even the first attempt was successful. The seedlings will remain in the container over winter, ideally with protection against freezing. They will require pricking out in spring. Presumably the cardboard can be cut into pieces and laid or pegged down onto a more conventional potting mix.

This procedure seems to offer an exciting new way of growing orchids from seed, well suited to the skills and techniques of most growers. Should it prove to work more generally, it opens up possibilities for making orchid plants available to many more gardeners or for return to native habitats. Raising large numbers from seed may also allow selection of superior horticultural forms. Let's have a variety of orchid seeds for the next seed list to widen the range of these fascinating plants available to us.

Originally published in the Alpine Garden Club of BC Bulletin, Winter 2006 and reprinted in the April 2006 Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society Newsletter.



AOS/COC Events & Information

By Kevin Duerksen

The Fraser Valley Orchid Society in Langley B.C. will be hosting the meetings of the C.O.C. The show and meetings will be in October '09. It is on the C.O.C. site <http://www.canadianorchidcongress.ca/>

For those interested in what's new in Canadian orchid judging, check out the Vancouver judging center page <http://www.orchidbc.ca/page3.html> , with regular newsletters and pictures of Canadian awarded plants.

The FVOS also has a link to the Vancouver A.O.S. Judging Center.

A.O.S. 2009 Calendar order

Anyone interested please contact Kevin Duerksen at 633-0314 or aos-coc-rep@manitobaorchidsociety.ca

If enough people order, the price can be as low as \$12. We need volume to get the low price. The deadline will be around the end of October, so let me know soon.

Minutes - Manitoba Orchid Society General Meeting September 21, 2008

Recorder: Joan Heshka

1. Call to order:

President Dave Moran called the meeting to order at 2:00pm

Welcomed a new member and a guest.

Volunteers to bring refreshments for the October meeting - Barb Tagg, Darlene Stack, Fran Cass & Fernando Tan.

The Novice Program was questions and answers by Kyle Lucyk, assisted by Jim Roy.

Program

Kyle Lucyk introduced our guest speaker, Jason Fischer from Orchids Limited in Minneapolis.

Jason's presentation was on "Native Orchids of Japan".

At the conclusion of the presentation, on behalf of the MOS, Dave Moran thanked Jason for an excellent presentation.

2. Minutes of the last meeting:

Motion by Robert Kato to accept the minutes of the last 2 meetings, as published; seconded by Sandy Carroll; carried.

3. Financial report:

Garnet Ward presented the financial report for the year ending in Aug, 2008 and the MOS Orchid Show financial summary. Copies are available. Motion to accept these reports by Garnet, seconded by Pat Turenne, carried.

4. Programs:

Kyle Lucyk advised that the auction will take place during the October meeting. There will not be a Novice Meeting. Bring your plants with 2 tags - one with your name and the other with the plant name. The split will be 70(member)/30 (MOS). Plants to be in by 12:30pm. Sale will start at 1:00pm.

November meeting: to be announced

December meeting: Christmas Potluck - December 14

5. Show Chairperson Report:

Lorne Heshka advised that Robert Kato will act as the understudy for 2009 and will be prepared to take over responsibility as Show Chair for 2010.

Lorne & Dave met with Ken Beattie and discussed a different Profit sharing agreement.

Confirmed Judges: Terry Kennedy, Chair; Kathy Creger; Giberto Arrieche; and either Ernest Gemeinhart or Mario Ferrusi.

All previous show committee members have agreed to stay on with the exception of Denise Fortier who asked to be relieved of the Publicity responsibility. We need a volunteer for that position.

6. AOS/COC Representative:

Kevin Duerksen reported that the 2009 COC Show is at Langley BC

COC Newsletter is on the COC website

Will try to order AOS calendars for 2009 - sign up no later than the OCT meeting.

7. Hospitality:

Eva Slavicek has agreed to take this on this position- no report.

8. Library:

Lilianne Foster, contact her for books - check the website for a list of books available.

9. Public Relations:

Position vacant.

10. Membership:

Gary Jaworski advised that we have 77 members.

11. Newsletter:

Rob Parsons - no report.

12. Website:

Rob Kato – no report.

13. Special Orders:

Jim Roy - no report.

14. Correspondence:

Letter from the Walter Regehr family - expressing thanks for disposing of Walter's orchid supplies and they donated a cheque of \$214.00 that was raised from the sale.

Shelmerdine advised that their discount is now 10%.

15. Show & Tell

Jason Fischer described the plants, assisted by Kyle Lucyk & Rob Parsons.

16. Adjournment:

Motion to Adjourn - Gary Jaworski

Note: Minutes of the Executive Meetings are available to be picked up at General Meetings on request from the Secretary.