

President's Message

Dear Members of the Atlanta Orchid Society,

What an *incredible* weekend! Our 63rd Annual Orchid Show – “Orchid Wonderland” was a **smashing success**, and it's all thanks to *you*, our amazing volunteers and dedicated members. The energy, enthusiasm, and teamwork on display made this year's show one of the best yet!

From our fearless 2025 Show Chair, **Danny Lentz**, who steered this event with such efficiency, to **Bailey Santwire**, stepping up as our first-time AOS Chair, **Judging of the Show**—you both set the tone for professionalism and warmth that our society is known for.

And to every single person who helped to bring this show to life:

- **The Head Clerk (Kim Williams) and Clerks (Jean Clark, Jody Gomez, Bob Grzesik, Karl Harden, Jason Mills-Shoulta, Loretia Rocker, Joe Sayers)** who kept Ribbon Judging running smoothly, assisting the AOS judges
- **The volunteers handling Registration (Danny Lentz, Carson Barnes)**, ensuring everything was organized, and orchids were correctly classified per MAOC standards
- **Those working on Publicity (Nick Rust, Fi Alonso) and Printed Show Materials (Véronique Perrot, Danny Lentz)**, getting the word out and making us look good
- **The team who put together our beautiful Society Exhibit (Edison Gu, Paul Reavis, Nick Rust)**; by the way, we won the AOS Show Trophy and a Silver Certificate of 85 points! Woohoo!!! (See photo on page 3.)
- **The Staging crew (Danny Lentz, Véronique Perrot, Loretia Rocker, Lyn Kirkland, Maggie Wattley, Garland Simon, Jennifer Schwab, Steve Schwab)**, transforming Day Hall into an Orchid Wonderland
- **The welcoming folks at Public Reception (Barbara Barnett, Terry Grover, Loretia Rocker)**
- **Our energetic helpers at the Supply Table (Steve Schwab, Mary Moore, Loretia Rocker, Jennifer Schwab, Margaret Cekis, Elaine Cekis,**

Emma Dahl, Greg Levine, Terry Glover, Fi Alonso) and Orkids Table (Jennifer Schwab, Emma Dahl, Loretia Rocker, Fi Alonso)

- **The generous and thoughtful Hospitality team (Dan Alvear, Emily Robinson, Loretia Rocker)**, who kept everyone fueled with delicious treats, warm smiles, and a welcoming atmosphere that made volunteers, vendors, judges, and visitors alike feel right at home
- **The organizer behind Trophies and Awards (HB Blythe-Hart)**, who made sure our winners felt the love
- **The smiling faces at Membership (Barbara Barnett, Steve Schwab, Edison Gu)**, welcoming new friends into our society
- **And the stalwart team behind Take-down and Clean-up (Danny Lentz, Bailey Santwire, Edison Gu, Jon Crate, Loretia Rocker, Steve Schwab, Mary Moore, Carson Barnes, Fi Alonso)**, making sure we left everything better than we found it!

A warm and heartfelt thank you to our fellow orchid societies—the Middle Georgia Orchid Society and the South Metro Orchid Society—for your stunning exhibits! You brought an incredible variety of orchid species and hybrids, carefully selected and beautifully arranged, to create exhibits that truly showcased the breadth, diversity, and exceptional quality of your collections. Your dedication and artistry added so much beauty and inspiration to the show, and we are grateful for your continued friendship, support, and the spirit of camaraderie you bring to our annual event. Your exhibits helped make “Orchid Wonderland” truly live up to its name!

We extend our sincere gratitude to our esteemed vendors (Ecuagenera, Florida Orchid House, Maneki Hill Orchids, Marble Branch Farms, Owens Orchids, Peach State Orchids) for their impressive displays and diverse selections of orchid species and hybrids, which captivated attendees from the moment they entered. Whether seasoned



collectors were searching for that rare gem, or first-time growers were choosing their very first orchid to take home, our vendors offered something for everyone. Your **expertise, passion, and willingness to share knowledge** made the sales area not just a marketplace, but an **inviting and educational experience** that inspired new and seasoned orchid enthusiasts alike!

If I've overlooked anyone, please accept my sincerest apologies—but know this: I see you, and I am deeply grateful for everything you've done to make our orchid show such a success.

Our society thrives because of *you*. It's **your passion, dedication, and hard work** that make the Atlanta Orchid Society such a **special community**.

I'm already looking forward to doing it all again next year! Mark your calendars for our **64th Annual Orchid Show**, March 13–15, 2026, once again at Day Hall, Atlanta Botanical Garden. Until then, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Warm regards,

Firelli “Fi” Alonso
President, Atlanta Orchid Society
2025

PS. The challenge of listing volunteer names is the unintended risk of overlooking key contributors! My sincere apologies to **Jojo Stickney** and **Carl Quattlebaum** for not acknowledging their generous hosting of the Orchid Lovers Party on Friday evening. The food was a culinary delight, and the camaraderie was fantastic! This event was a heartfelt celebration and expression of gratitude for all show volunteers, vendors, and AOS judges alike.

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The [Atlanta Orchid Society](#) is affiliated with the [American Orchid Society](#), the [Orchid Digest Corporation](#), the [Mid-America Orchid Congress](#), and the [Garden Club of Georgia](#).



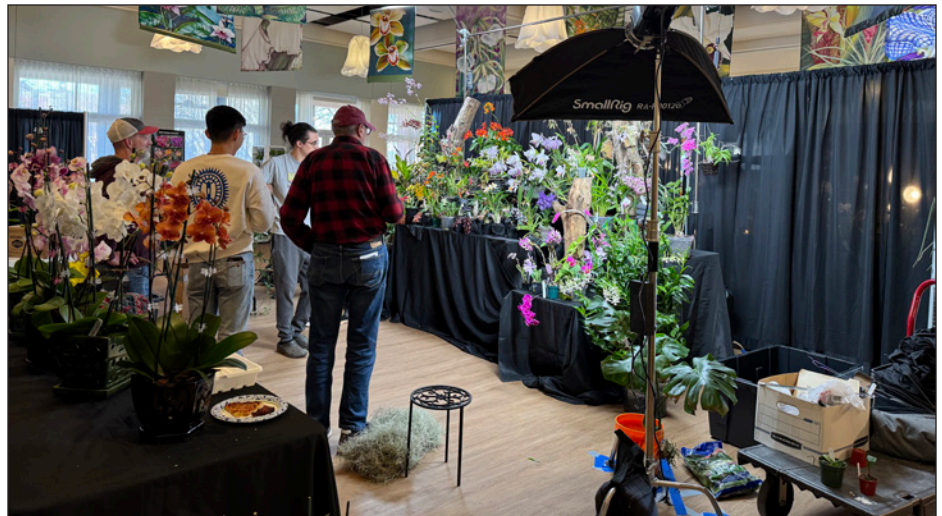
Best Orchids in Use: Orchid Arrangement by Terry Furuta



The Atlanta Orchid Society exhibit. The exhibit earned the AOS Show Trophy and a Silver certificate; see the award description below.

Award Description

A tabletop exhibit 4.1m long x 1.8m wide x 2.7m high, with 101 plants of high quality and variety; a variety of *Cattleya luddemanniana f. coerulea* as the focal point of the exhibit; the colors ranged from red to orange on one side, to white to olive green tones and mahogany in the middle, to lavender and pink on the other side; black draperies at the back of the display with well-positioned lighting throughout; 101 well-grown plants, with 4 specimen plants, and high quality flowers included a variety of species and hybrids; a natural exhibit incorporating sphagnum moss and driftwood accented the flowers unobtrusively; received the Show Trophy of 85 points and also received a Silver Certificate of 85 points.



Putting the exhibit together



The driftwood structure supporting the plants



Marble Branch Farms exhibit. *Cymbidium* Swan Lake, in the middle of the exhibit, earned the Best *Cymbidium* Alliance and the Best Specimen Plant trophies. The yellow *Dendrobium* in center right of the exhibit, *Den.* Chinsai, earned the best Best *Dendrobium* Alliance trophy.



South Metro Orchid Society exhibit



Middle Georgia Orchid Society exhibit



Maneki Hil Orchids exhibit



Peach State Orchids exhibit



Ecuagenera's exhibit



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Owens Orchids exhibit. *Oncidiopsis* Onolicious 'Vivid,' in bottom left of the exhibit, won the trophy for Best *Oncidium* Alliance.



The OrKids table was a huge success!



Julie Jennings at her booth, with silk-painted banners, scarves, and ties.

2025 Atlanta Orchid Show Trophy Winners

Notes by Mark Reinke



Paphiopedilum Saint Swithin

AnnaLee Boyett Memorial Trophy for Best Cypripedium Alliance / Best Orchid in the Show Trophy – *Paphiopedilum Saint Swithin* – Danny Lentz & Dianne Morgan

This classic mix of *Paphiopedilum rothschildianum* and *Paph. philippinense* was first registered in 1901 but has been remade numerous times for obvious reasons. It can possess the true wow factor when well grown yet does not become overwhelmingly large. OK, it isn't a small plant either. A happy mature example can produce several imposing inflorescences, each with four or five flowers up to eight inches wide and tall. There are at least nine examples that have received

a First Class Certificate and an astounding 225 (at least) in total awarded by the American Orchid Society. There are likely few other orchid hybrids that can match such a celebrated record. Fittingly, this plant, grown by Danny and Dianne, received the trophy not just for the Slipper Alliance but as the best flower in the entire show! It had ten large flowers on two inflorescences, each with a boldly striped erect dorsal sepal and long flowing petals with spiral twists reminiscent

of the *Paph. philippinense* parent, but with much greater size. Keep in mind when acquiring an unflowered seedling of this cross (the most common way it is found for sale) that each one is a unique blend of the characteristics of the two parents. Some will hold the petals more horizontally without any twist favoring the *Paph. rothschildianum* parent. This orchid appreciates a warm and humid growing environment in bright but diffused light.



Cymbidium Swan Lake

Best Specimen Plant in Show Trophy/ Best Cymbidium Alliance Trophy – *Cymbidium* Swan Lake – Mark Reinke / Marble Branch Farms

Cymbidium Swan Lake is an heirloom variety that was registered in 1968 by Clark Day, Jr., of Rancho Palos Verdes California. It is one of sixteen crosses he registered for that genus, and likely the only one still in cultivation today. In that general time frame, many growers were marrying the large standard *Cymbidium* with the dwarf growing species, *Cym. floribundum*, in an effort to create floriferous hybrids that were scaled down in size. As I have mentioned before, even

though that species and the genetics of the large-flowered types are inherited from orchids that grow high enough in the mountains to prefer cool to mild conditions, somehow when combined together these varieties do quite well with our hot summer climate, as long as they are given copious amounts of water and regular feeding during the growing season. The only downside of this group is that the color range is limited to white or light pink flowers with deeper touch-

es in the lip. Probably because breeding strong tones wasn't achievable, few *Cym. floribundum* hybrids were introduced after the 1960's. To obtain one today is typically through the division of a plant that someone has owned for decades. I got this plant as a small rooted backbulb from a grower/speaker at our monthly meeting so long ago that I can't remember who it was any longer.



Holcovanostylis Ping Pong 'Ruel's Wish' AM-CCM/AOS

David Bankes Glass Memorial Trophy for Best Vanda Alliance – *Holcovanstylis* Ping Pong – Joe Sayers (AtLOS Exhibit)

This is an exceptionally well-flowered example of this unusual cross made by Peter T. Lin and involved three different genera in the Vandaceous group. It was registered in 2021 as a cross between *Vandachostylis* Pinky and *Holcoglossum phongii*. The latter is an unusual dwarf species from Vietnam only first described in 2014. It has small green flowers with a hint of purple in the lip, so the resulting colorful blooms of this cross were probably something of a surprise. The grex earned an Award of Quality for Peter in April of 2023 when twelve different seedlings in flower were presented at the Pacific Monthly Judging in San Diego. Four of those also received an Award of Merit. Last year, a plant exhibited at the Florida North-Central Judging in Orlando got a simultaneous Award of Merit and Certificate of Cultural Merit. It had twenty-two flowers on four inflorescences. Joe's plant bears possibly three times as many flowers as best I can tell from the photo of the society exhibit. The mixture of the three species involved should make *Hvs.* Ping Pong fairly tolerant of a wide temperature range, preferring bright light and plentiful water in the summer months and possibly a bit less,

but with good humidity maintained, in winter.





Epidendrum schummanianum

Best Cattleya Alliance Trophy – *Epidendrum schummanianum* – Edison Gu

This is a beautiful example of a species seldom seen and not easy to acquire. Originally described in 1911 by Schlechter, it was one of a group of species that were moved to an orchid genus called *Oerstedella* in 1981, but more recently brought back into *Epidendrum*. It is native to the Caribbean slope of Costa Rica and Panamá where it grows in lower elevation tropical forests as a large clump forming epiphyte. While the peak bloom period is late winter/early spring, there are examples in the award records blooming in summer and late fall as well. The termi-

nal inflorescence is normally a branched panicle carrying from 25 to 50 or more strikingly colored flowers each about an inch across. While variable, the segments are most often a warm ochre yellow at maturity, peppered with irregular chestnut-colored speckles. The lip is a contrasting blue-lavender, and the flowers are joined to the panicle by pedicellate ovaries that are often white. When a well-grown plant such as this one offers several growths in flower at once, the overall effect is quite fantastic. It is considered to be a plant for experienced

growers, requiring frequent water with perfect drainage from about May to December, and then a four-month rest period with less water, but continued rather high humidity. The most spectacular specimen awarded received a CCM of 89.7 points from the Hawaii Orchid Society in March 2017. It bore 808 open flowers and 120 additional buds on sixteen separate growths. The plant was about four feet tall and 2.5 feet wide. Edison is well on the way to achieving something similar with this plant, so I hope to see it again next year!



Phalaenopsis Miva Smartissimo 'Firelli' AM/AOS

Best Phalaenopsis Trophy – *Phalaenopsis* Miva Smartissimo 'Firelli' AM/AOS – Jon Crate & Firelli Alonso

This orchid was introduced by Michel Vacherot Orchids of Roquebrune-sur-Argens, France in 1988. That town is in Provence not far from the famous resorts of Cannes and Saint-Tropez. Translated from the French, their "About Us" page reads: "After leaving the company founded in 1886 in Boissy-Saint-Léger by Henri Vacherot, Michel Vacherot and his grandson settled at the foot of the rock of Roquebrune-sur-Argens in 1984. Today run by his daughter Raphaëlle, our

orchid garden covers 2,500 m² of heated greenhouses equipped with an in vitro culture laboratory. It is thanks to this laboratory that we produce thousands of plants each year for your enjoyment. A visit to our greenhouses will allow you to discover our orchids at different stages of growth, from the in vitro jar to the flowering plant. Our clientele is very diverse." They have registered over 500 new crosses including a large number of *Phalaenopsis*, and most of their regis-

tered names start with the word "Miva." This particular hybrid has a fairly typical mix of species found in modern crosses. Some of the resulting plants had solid pink flowers, while this one, awarded in March 2018 here in Atlanta, has a beautiful stippling of darker rose pink. Looking back over previous mentions of *Phal.* Miva Smartissimo 'Firelli' AM/AOS in our newsletters reveals that it has been well flowered at all seasons of the year, giving it high marks for performance.



Oncidiopsis Onolicious 'Vivid'

Best Oncidium Alliance – *Oncidiopsis Onolicious 'Vivid'* – Sheila Nicholson / Owen's Orchids

While this showy and compact orchid is a combination of *Oncidium* and *Miltoniopsis* as indicated by its nothogenus, the latter genus makes up more than 80 percent of its family tree and therefore it looks like and should be grown like a typical *Miltoniopsis* hybrid. The strong color is inherited from *Oncidium noezlianus*, which itself is a high-elevation species. This means keeping the plants in cool to somewhat warm temperatures and not subjecting them to our summer heat where they will languish. These orchids also do not like to totally dry out between waterings and allowing them to do so will lead to quick decline. If your plant is in sphagnum careful monitoring is required in order to maintain a bal-

ance between sopping wet and totally dry. Once completely dry, that medium is hydrophobic, and a casual watering will simply run through the pot without remoistening it. A better choice would be a mix of medium bark and large perlite. Then the pot could be situated on a saucer or tray where about a quarter inch of water could remain after each watering, lessening the burden. Once the water is gone, the plants should be rewatered and occasionally flushed well with pure water to reduce any mineral build up. Bright but diffused light is the best for this group. Flowering can occur on new growth anytime from late winter to early fall, so generally at least twice in a year.

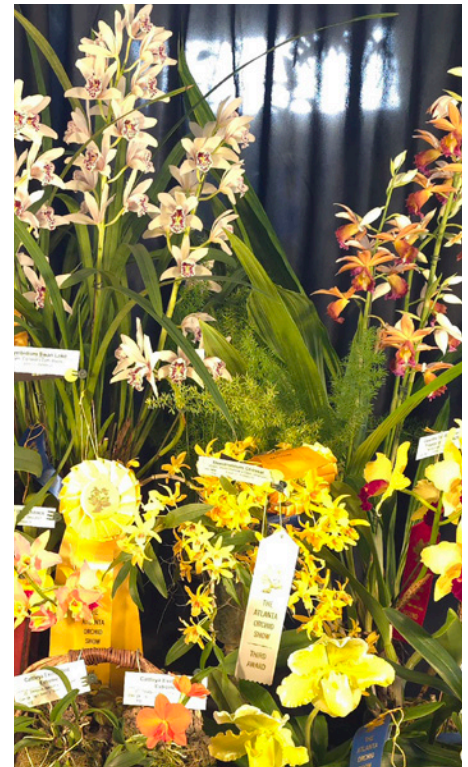


Dendrobium Chinsai

Best Dendrobium Alliance – *Dendrobium Chinsai* ‘MBF’ AM/AOS – Mark Reinke / Marble Branch Farms

Dendrobium Chinsai is a primary hybrid between the typically white *Den. monoliforme* and the orange *Den. unicum*. This plant has especially good color with flowers opening yellow and maturing to light orange. It is a littler deeper color than the ‘Little Joe’ form that is the most commonly seen example. I got this plant bare root a couple of years ago from Ec-uagenera. It became established very quickly and produced an abundance of growth the last two seasons. Last year I had but a few flowers, but this year all the growths budded for a very eye-catching show. I expect there will be fewer blooms next year while it concentrates on replacing all the bloomed-out growths. While *Den. unicum* can be a bit fussy as a grower, I find the hybrids made from it to be much easier. They prefer very small pots for the plant size (this one is in a 2.5 inch square plastic pot with sphag-

num) and like lots of water, almost daily, while actively growing, with less in the winter. Still, I barely let the pot dry out before I water again at that time of year. Cooler nights at least to about 60F are helpful for good budding. I should stress also that once growth reaches full size in fall, fertilizer needs to be withheld, or the plants will produce lots of keikis and fewer flowers. Some *Den. unicum* hybrids flower as late as June depending on the mix of other species involved and your particular growing environment.



Dendrobium Chinsai in Marble Branch Farms exhibit



Zygolum Louisendorf grex 'Isabel' AM/AOS

Best Miscellaneous Genera – *Zygolum Louisendorf grex 'Isabel' AM/AOS* – Firelli Alonso & Jon Crate

This plant earned Fi and Jon the highest score ever given for an award of this cross with an 87-point Award of Merit in November 2021. The registration was done by Leon Gleicstein of Hoosier Orchids in 2004 as a cross between *Zygosepalum labiosum* and *Zygopetalum Artur Elle*, but the story behind its origins is a complicated one. I will quote with permission from an article in the February 2021 newsletter of the South Coast Orchid Society based in Los Alamitos California to help tell the story:

“*Zygolum Louisendorf*, the one many people are now calling *Louisendorf grex*, also has a history of confusion in the orchid register. It’s instructive to see what went wrong. The puzzling story was reported by Leon Glicenstein in *Orchids* 79(12) (December 2010), pp. 702-705. In 2003, Leon was a vendor (Hoosier Orchid Company, which ceased operations in 2008) at the Pennsylvania Orchid Society Orchid Show at the King of Prussia Mall near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was already involved in *Zygopetalum* breeding and spotted a plant in another booth labeled *Zygopetalum Louisendorf*. He could tell it didn’t look right for a true *Zygopetalum* and tried to obtain clarification. He could not find any simi-

lar hybrid in the RHS orchid register and asked the Orchid Committee for assistance. Eventually, the source of the plant was traced to Orchideen Holm in Germany, but Holm did not wish to register the plant—and that’s another problem for orchid growers, unregistered plant names used in commerce! In 2004 the plant appeared in the orchid registry as *Zygolum Louisendorf*, the registration credited to Leon.

Not long after, three hybrids appeared in commercial sources, as *Zygopetalum* Rhein Moonlight, Rhein Clown, and Rhein Harlequin, all of which have been awarded at some point. Leon thought they were all seedlings of the same hybrid already called *Louisendorf*. Before that problem could be resolved, three more hybrids were offered commercially under the names *Galeopetalum* Giant ‘Rhein Moonlight’, ‘Rhein Clown’, and ‘Rhein Harlequin’. It was clear to Leon, who had already made crosses involving *Galeottia*, that these could not be actual *Galeopetalum*. They were instead the very same Rhein hybrids, masquerading under different names. With further correspondence, he was able to establish that Rhein Moonlight and Rhein Clown were indeed cultivars of *Louisendorf*,

but Rhein Harlequin was a back-cross of *Louisendorf* to one of its parents, *Zygopetalum Artur Elle*. Somewhere along the line, Rhein Harlequin also got respelled as Rhein Harlekin in commerce, and then, by unknown hands, registered as *Zygolum Rhein Harlequin*, with incorrect or at least misleading parentage *Z. Artur Elle* × *Zspm. lindeniae* and credited to Hoosier Orchid Company! In the end, there are three correct names, which you can list with or without the additional word *grex*: *Zygolum Louisendorf* for the main *grex*, along with *Zygolum Louisendorf 'Rhein Moonlight'* and *Zygolum Louisendorf 'Rhein Clown'* as two of its cultivars, and the hybrid *Zygolum Rhein Harlequin*.”

While quite a complicated tale, it illustrates how in the cultivation of orchids the keeping of records and accurate names is so important from a registration standpoint, an exhibition standpoint, and simply to know how to best grow it based on its ancestry. We can be thankful that almost 175 years ago, the Royal Horticultural Society began the Orchid Registration List and therefore the detailed family tree of almost every registered hybrid can be traced back through all its generations to the original species.