

## Alan's Bench

Alan Gettleman

There are many milestones for orchid hobbyists as we gain in our knowledge and proficiency. You receive your first plant, and bloom your first flower. You showed that flower to every friend, neighbor, and family member you could find. Somewhere along the way you started to think: "Maybe, just maybe I can grow orchids."

You bring your flower to the monthly meeting and win your first recognition, and then later at an orchid show your first ribbon. You remember the first time that well known grower of rare and beautiful plants walks over to you and says "That is hard to grow; I never got my plant to look that good."

Most of us hope to someday win an AOS award, and a few of our members have obtained that honor. But two of our longtime members recently achieved the ultimate compliment, and what few of us could ever dream: they were honored by having an orchid cross named for them.

Mariottara Ruth Larson (BLC Hauserman's Paprika x *Brassavola cucullata* (L.) Rchb.f. (1862)

First, what is a Mariottara (Mrr.)? With the recognition of *Rhycolaelia* crosses as a separate genus than *Brassavola*, the hybrid genus Mariottara comprising *Brassavola*, *Cattleya*, *Rhycolaelia*, and *Sophranitis*. Club member Jamie Lawson made the cross. Jamie relates: "I had made a number of crosses using *Brassavola cucullata*. I really liked the feminine shape of *cucu* and I was interested to see if I could get something like B. David Sanders with its lovely shape but with more color.

One of the crosses was Blc Hauserman's Paprika x *B. cucullata*. . . I did give a flask to George over at EFG. . . I visited EFG and theirs were lovely, well grown, mounted seedlings. George gave me one of the biggest and when it finally bloomed, I decided to name it after Ruth in honor of her wonderful spirit and joy in life. Under the old naming rules, it would be a Blc but now it is considered a Marriottara, thus Marriottara Ruth Larson."

The plant pictured was grown by Ruth. Thank you Jamie and congratulations Ruth on your namesake!



Mariottara Ruth Larson

*Rhizome*: n., a creeping stem lying, usually horizontally, at or under the surface of the soil...

# The Rhizome

## Board Members 2008

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## BLC Jim Adamson (LC Wainae Blaze x BLC Owen Holmes)

You don't talk long with Charlie Bishop before knowing he loves red Cattleyas. Charlie proposed naming the cross for Jim. Charlie recounted: "I found Jim's plant in bloom in his greenhouse a year ago last fall. I repotted it and it bloomed again last fall. Since it was an unnamed cross, I asked Jim if he knew who the hybridizer was. I knew I needed permission from him to name it. Jim called Ben Kodoma in Hawaii for me and found out that the hybridizer was Gered Takasaki; the rest was easy. I e-mailed Takasaki and got permission and named it after Jim. It was a complete surprise for Jim who thought I was going to name it for myself. I could not think of anyone who deserved it more than Jim. The PCOS sponsored the naming for our long time member and then President Jim Adamson. Charlie Bishop made the presentation at the PCOS Christmas Party in December. Thank you Charlie and congratulations Jim.

Orchid hybrids take several years from conception to blooming, so hybridizing is an act of patience, hope, and perseverance. Since the first modern cross *Cattleya hybrida* was registered in 1863, many thousands of crosses have been registered. But for members of the PCOS, BLC Jim Adamson and Mrs. Ruth Larson will always be some of our favorite hybrids. So, is anyone for a cross of our local red BLC with a *Brassavola cucullata* Mariottara hybrid?



*Ruth  
Larson*



*Jim  
Adamson*

## Springtime Orchid (related) Destinations

*Alan Gettleman*

Plant festivals are prominent in springtime and many in our area will have orchids. Several are local and free: -Florida Tech Botanical Fest, Saturday March 7, 8 am-4pm. (321) 674-8962 On Babcock Street about 1 mile south of US 192 (New Haven Avenue).

As an alumnus of Florida Tech, I am particularly fond of this event. In its third year, Florida Tech hosts about thirty vendors of plants and plant supplies. Jim's Orchid Supplies of Ft. Pierce is the only orchid related vendor I know will be there, but in past years Palm Bay Secret Gardens and other private orchid sellers were there. Lots of annuals/palms/bromeliads/colorful landscaping plants will be offered. Florida Tech's founder, the late Dr. Jerome Keuper was a palm enthusiast and there is a great representation of native and exotic palms to see. Admission: free.

-Leu Garden Annual Plant Sale, Saturday and Sunday, March 21-22 9am-5pm (members get in at 8am on March 21).

For me this is one of the best general plant sales in Florida, better than those offered by many other botanic gardens in the state. Sharon Groome who has Vandas/Ascodendas by the hundreds is usually a vendor as well as The Orchid Specialist, Tropiflora (which may or may not have orchids but lots of bromeliads) and some local growers. Palms, bamboos, gingers, native plants, camellias, ferns. Great plants and plenty of food. Admission: Free to the sale and garden both days. Leu Garden is a treasure for a notable display of camellias and roses, as well as many tropical palms. Location: 1920 N. Forest Ave, Orlando, FL 32803. (407) 246-2620. Leu Gardens is north of the intersection of SR 50 (Colonial) and Mills, Go north on Mills and follow the signs.<http://www.leugardens.org/events.html>

-Fairchild Tropical Garden, Coral Gables, FL 7th Annual International Orchid Festival, Friday-Sunday March 13-15. 9:30am-4:30 pm.

All right, this is neither close (3 ½-4 hour drive each way), cheap (\$20.00 to get in) and is an AOS judged orchid show. I have not been to this event, but Fairchild is a great venue and the premier palm repository in the Americas. Fifty vendors will set up throughout the garden. Also workshops and walking tours are promised. Fairchild is south of downtown Miami at 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables, FL (305) 667-1651.  
<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/index.cfm?page=home>

## Membership

Members who have not renewed their membership for 2009 should print out the form, fill it out and either bring it to the next meeting with their dues or send it to me at the address on the form. Dues for 2009 are due by March 15th. Current members who have not renewed their membership by then will be removed from the membership list. We currently have only 66 members registered for 2009.

Thanks,

Jack Taylor

## March 2009

**Wed. March 11, 2009:** Regular meeting at 7:00. Board Members meet at 6:15pm. Cocoa Expo Center, 500 Friday Road, Cocoa, Florida.

**Wed. March 25, 2009:** Cocoa Beach Back to Basics Meeting, 6:30pm, Cocoa Beach Library, 550 North Brevard Avenue, Cocoa Beach, Florida.

# Platinum Coast Orchid Society

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