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Jim's Bench

Jim Adamson

Hello Members,

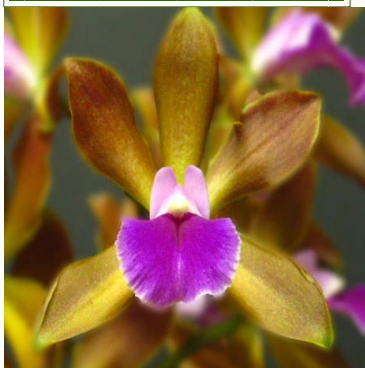
I hope this finds all of you in better health than what I have been fighting recently. The flu-like bug combined with allergies has been a real drag. It has been so bad that I have not even considered putting a plant sale together for this meeting. Perhaps we can have one at the May meeting.

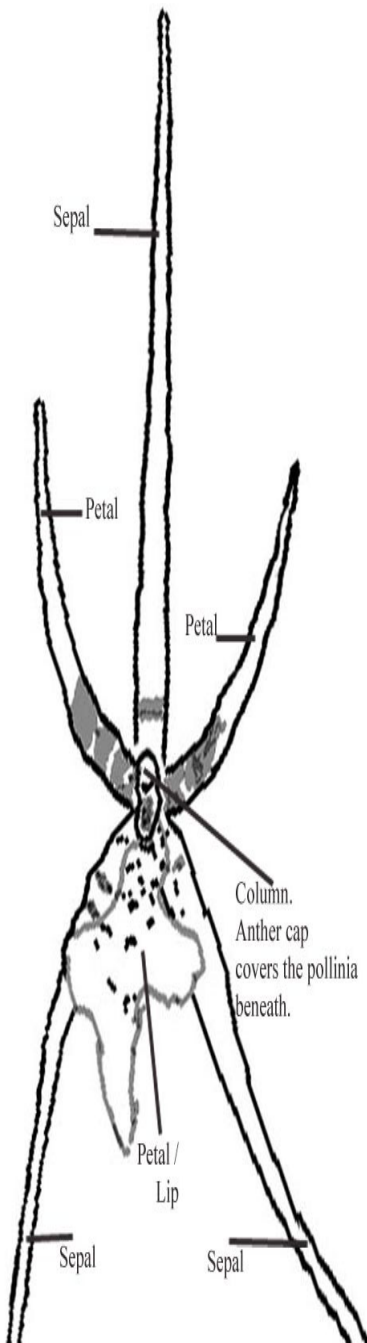
I sincerely apologize for the problem encountered for last month's meeting. Expo saw fit to wait until 11 o'clock the day of the meeting to spring bad news about the room availability.

This month's meeting will be on Monday April 9, at the regular meeting time: 6:15 Board Members and 7pm Regular Meeting, in the room behind the cafeteria at the Cocoa Expo Center.

Please attend this meeting. We plan for something similar to our program at the Cocoa Beach meeting, which seems to be well received there. I was hoping to be able to attend the meeting at Cocoa Beach to speak on a different concept for potting medium. At this Regular April Meeting I plan on talking about that. I believe you will be surprised that after all these years, I think there is a better way!!

Jim





Brassias

The genus *Brassia* spans throughout the tropics of our hemisphere, dotting areas from here in Florida to Peru, with about thirty different species. Fertilized by a spider-killing female wasp, these fragrant green to brownish-yellow spotted flowers are commonly referred to as “spider orchids.”

Brassia, named for British botanist and illustrator, William Brass, is abbreviated “*Brs*” and is an epiphytic member of the Oncidiinae subtribe. *Brassia* species are found from South Florida, down into tropical America and the West Indies, from sea level up into the mountains.

The spider orchid is pollinated by insects in the wild, and specifically known are two kinds of spider-killing wasps: *Pepsis* (known as Tarantula Hawks) and *Campsomeris*. The wasp lands on the lip of the flower, stinging it repeatedly, trying to grab “stunned” prey, the pollinarium of the flower sticks to the wasp’s head so that when it flies to another *Brassia* lip and stings it, it also fertilizes it.

Brassias are known for their exceptionally long, spreading petals and sepals; found in some specimens, tepals have been longer than fifty centimeters. These flowers have short pollinariums and the lip is unattached to the column, on long, unbranched inflorescences growing out of two sheaths near the base of the oblong, elliptic pseudobulbs.

Tickets for the Orchid Umbrella

The Orchid Umbrella might be yours for the spring and summer shows! Tickets are available for \$1.00 a chance, 8 for \$5.00 or 20 for \$10.00 and will continue to be sold until the May regular meeting. You need not be present to win.

Sunshine

Betty Adamson

Golden Anniversary Wishes: Happy 50th anniversary wishes to Gail& Charlie Bishop.

Cattleya

Input on *Cattleya amethystoglossa* continues from last month. All of us who own one should now have enjoyed the magnificent blooms of our plant. It is definitely one of the popular springtime bloomers. Jim Adamson has a *C amethystoglossa*, which he entered in the Daytona Beach Orchid Society show, and it captured lots of attention, in addition to winning the Best Cattleya in Show with about twelve blooms. He had wired up each flower, without breaking a one! The audience was awed when he began to remove them after he placed it in his exhibit.



Current Orchid Shows

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden International Orchid Festival, Fairchild Tropical Gardens, 10901 Old Cutler Rd., Coral Gables, FL, March 30– April 1.

Sebring (Highlands Orchid Society) Show: Ag-Civic Center, 4509 George Blvd., Seabring, FL, March 31– April 1

*Orlando, Central Florida Orchid Society Show: Central Florida Fairgrounds, 4603 W. Colonial Dr., April 6- April 8.

Vero Beach Orchid Society Show (non-AOS show): McKee Botanical Gardens, 350 US HWY 1, Vero Beach, FL April 28– 29.

* Indicates a show attended by Jim Adamson

Enormous Show! *Betty Adamson*

At the 62nd Miami Orchid Show the grand prize winner was a *Dendrobium spectabile*. It was a two hundred pound plant, five feet tall, with *seventy* flower spikes and the judges tried to count the blooms! It was twice the size of previous winners of its species. It, of course, received many other awards besides the Grand Champion one. They customarily move the winner to the special entry spot for viewing by the public. Once this one was in place, it stayed!

The owner, Patrick O’Day, proprietor of the Orchid Source in Hawaii, bought the plant when it was six years old and has been growing it for approximately fifteen years, with direct sunlight and regular fertilization. The plant came via Federal Express, inside a cardboard box and protected by peanuts. He stated his main concern was that the plant might freeze during a layover in Nashville when it was being flown to the Show.



Monday, April 9: Regular business meeting: in the room behind *Cocoa Expo Cafeteria*

6:15pm Board Members

7pm Regular Meeting

Wednesday, April 25:

6:15pm Back to Basics Meeting, *Cocoa Beach Library*

Orchid Facts

- During Victorian times, orchids were status symbols that were coveted, and plant hunters were sent all over the world to find them.
- The largest number of orchids come from Asia.
- Orchids are so hardy, they can be found surviving in most conditions all over the world, minus the polar regions.
- The orchid species *Galeola* has the largest seeds of the orchid family, that have wings.
- The vine-like *Galeola* can grow stems that reach sixty feet in mere days.

Platinum Coast Orchid Society

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