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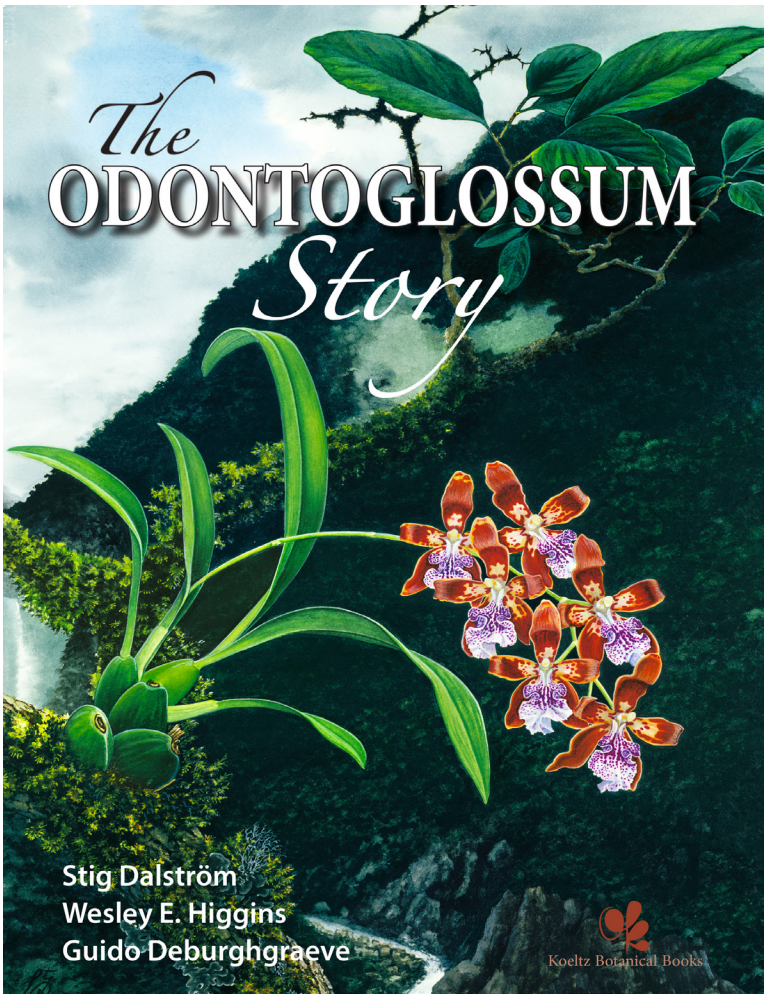
In This Issue

The Odontoglossum Story

Stig Dalström

When I made the decision to sort out some of the confusing *Odontoglossum* Kunth taxonomy back in 1979 during a trip to Ecuador, I did not anticipate that it would take me and others on a 40-year- long journey through some of the most-convoluted, plant systematic mazes in existence. But sometimes it is a good thing not to know too much about the stairs you will have to climb to finally reach an upper level of understanding. My work with *Odontoglossum* really began when I arrived in Sarasota, Florida, on a balmy night, November 7, 1981. I was met at the Trailways bus station by Carl Luer who introduced me to The Marie Selby Botanical Gardens the following day. It was love at first sight and I got to meet Calaway Dodson who was the director of research at the time, and the rest of the dedicated, enthusiastic, and somewhat quirky staff. I felt at home right away.

Planting my foot at Selby Gardens allowed me to work with some of the world's most-renowned orchid taxonomists at the time and I tried to absorb as much as I could from them. The following years were an intense time for me. Commuting between Sweden, Sarasota and South America was both time and money consuming. But visiting Selby Gardens gave me the opportunity and the literal resources to move ahead with my *Odontoglossum* project, so I tried to take advantage of that as much as possible. This resulted in a rather premature and limited understanding of what this genus was all about. But as often is the case, the beginner is the one who thinks he knows it all and I was invited to present my conclusions on "What is an *Odontoglossum*" during the 11th WOC in Miami in 1984. At this lecture, I split *Odontoglossum* into six groups, where the first three represented the species that I believed truly belonged in the genus (*epidendroides*, *constrictum* and *astranthum* complexes). The three remaining groups consisted of species I believed should be included in *Cyrtochilum* Kunth together with many "*Oncidium*" species that shared similar vegetative



features, which were vegetatively "different" from the "true" odontoglossums in the first three groups.

After the conference I thought I was ready to publish my findings, but that is when I realized I had competition. Leonore Bockemühl, a German architect, had been working with *Odontoglossum* for some time, and she began publishing articles about her work in *Die Orchidee*, right "under my nose". How frustrating! When her long awaited monograph finally arrived a few years later, it became the "final word" at the time and I realized that I would have to wait for a few years if I wanted to publish something of my own. How lucky I was with that decision! Bockemühl's treatment was an eye-opener for me, which provided a lot of useful information. But it also created some taxonomic disagreements. For instance, why did she include species such as "*Odontoglossum*" *angustatum* Lindl., and *O. ramosissimum* Lindl., in the treatment? She even established separate subgenera for these and closely allied species; Unguisepala Bockem., for the *O. ramosissimum* complex, and Serratolaminata Bockem., for the *O. angustatum* complex. This did not make any sense to me. I was convinced that these subgenera really should not be included in *Odontoglossum* at all, as I had explained during my lecture at the WOC in 1984. How to prove that?

In addition to the *Odontoglossum-Cyrtochilum* dilemma, there was a new problem emerging on the horizon in the shape of some preliminary molecular work on these orchids by Mark Chase and others. I was invited to give a lecture at the Speaker's Day (I believe it was called) in New York in 1994. On the way to the lecture hall, I shared a taxi with Chase and that is when he presented some of their early results in DNA sequencing. He explained that he intended to transfer genera *Odontoglossum* and *Sigmatostalix* Rchb.f., into *Oncidium* based on these findings. I was a bit taken aback by this. It did not make much sense to me. How were you going to define *Oncidium* then I thought? I realized that I had to intensify my research to defend my position in this slowly evolving taxonomic "battle". But I was up against a formidable opponent for sure!

The DNA results were a mixed blessing/curse for me though. On one hand, it gave me the results I needed to eliminate all *Cyrtochilum* species from *Odontoglossum* based on molecular evidence. This was done in a preliminary and rather premature checklist for *Cyrtochilum*, which was published in *Lindleyana* in 2001. Some of my decisions in that publication were based on little available information, and a revised checklist was badly needed. This work has begun but will take a while to complete. But it separated *Odontoglossum* from unrelated taxa and that was the main purpose. Now I could move forward with the real task. But how would I justify keeping both *Odontoglossum* and *Sigmatostalix* as valid genera despite Chase's findings? I realized that I needed to learn more about this DNA sequencing technique so that I could find a way to prove my own position. I therefore contacted Norris Williams and Mark Whitten at the University of Florida in Gainesville to see if they would be willing to give me a crash-course on the subject. Not a problem! Thanks to their great hospitality and generosity, and with their time, I got a better understanding what this

DNA sequencing technique was about, the advantages and also the problems involved in the process. It also showed me that I was on the right track and that there were excellent arguments available to defend keeping both *Odontoglossum* and *Sigmatostalix*.

During my years as an *Odontoglossum* taxonomist, I met wonderful people in many countries who shared the same feelings and opinions about how to treat *Odontoglossum*. Actually, it was rare to find anybody who supported the "Chase transfer". The most ardent supporter of my position was Guido Deburghgraeve, from Liedekerke in Belgium, who became a great friend and travel companion in this crusade. The two of us set out to do some serious fieldwork in the Andes so that we could get a better understanding of what *Odontoglossum* really was all about in Nature. Studying crummy dried specimens from obscure sources in various herbaria around the world will only get you so far. Seeing them in their natural habitats provides so much-more valuable information, which you need to present a fair description of them. This is a time and money consuming business though but having a great time with great people is really invaluable.

When Guido and I finally decided to try to publish our findings, we needed help. Serendipitously, my former boss at the Selby Gardens' Orchid Identification Center, Wesley Higgins left that institution on the same occasion as I did in 2009. Officially retired, he was looking for things to do aside from cruising the Caribbean together with his wife and was most willing to participate in the *Odontoglossum* project. But we needed a layout person as well because we were going to publish an old-fashioned book in a grand style. Wes suggested Peg Alrich who I also had worked with on an earlier project, and she accepted the challenge. The next step was to decide what to include in this *Odontoglossum* book. In an attempt to broaden the scope and create a wider audience, we invited a number of guest authors to write chapters on their particular specialties. Phillip Cribb decided to write about "The Rise of *Odontoglossum*", which deals with the *Odontoglossum* mania in England from the mid nineteenth century to the early years of the twentieth century. Peter Sander decided to write about his great grandfather, the "Orchid King" Frederick Sander, and his company's contributions to the glorious *Odontoglossum* era. Rik Neirynck has authored a thorough chapter about how orchids in general and *Odontoglossum* in particular hit Belgium, much thanks to the efforts by Jean Linden and others. Alex Hirtz writes about the evolution of *Odontoglossum* in Ecuador and why that is. Marta Kolanowska makes it easy to understand more about the importance and usefulness of the DNA sequencing technique. Brian Phelan tells us how he grows *Odontoglossum* and allied genera in a greenhouse in Australia, while Andrey Romanko describes the technical details how he grows *Odontoglossum* under artificial lights in Russia. John Miller gives us a brief history of the *Odontoglossum* Alliance, and, last but certainly not the least, Gerhardt Vierling writes a tribute to Leonore Bockemühl and her invaluable contributions to what we know today about our favorite orchid genus. But there is so much more for any reader to explore! A scientific treatment of all recognized species with full nomenclature, descriptions, distribution maps, illustrations and many, many color photos of all species of course enrich this book. Most species are captured in their natural habitats. But there are also photos of the scenery where these orchids make their homes and of people who made this book possible by participating in the search for them, often with great efforts due to a hostile environment, or hostile people, earthquakes, landslides, floods, rain, strikes, riots, fleas, food poisoning, kidney stones and other serious ailments. But be assured that we could not have finished the job at such a rewarding level without you! We, the authors are also most grateful for the financial support from the International Odontoglossum Alliance and its members! Thank You!

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On the Conservation of *Odontoglossum dracoceps*

Guido Deburghgraeve

In 1992, I received a division of an unidentified *Odontoglossum* Kunth plant (Fig.1) from a generous lady in Holland. The plant was originally collected

Fig. 1. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* 009 plant

in Bolivia and probably in a heavily deforested area near Tablas Montes along the road from Cochabamba to Villa Tunari (Fig.2). It was Stig Dalström who

Fig. 2. Tablas Montes Bolivia, very endangered area (photo Stig Dalström)

later correctly identified this plant as an undescribed *Odontoglossum* during his first visit to Liedekerke in 1996. He was astonished to see this plant in flower in my collection and was very curious about the provenance. He took some flowers with him and a drawing of that flower appears in the original description of *Odontoglossum dracoceps*.Dalström (1999; fig. 2 A; Deburghgraeve 9) (Fig.3). He also explained the entire intriguing story of that plant, and the rarity of it.

Odontoglossum dracoceps was described by Stig in 1999. The name refers to the distal part of the column that looks like the head of a Chinese dragon (Fig.4). The type plant (Fig.5) was probably collected in the same area as where the "*Deburghgraeve 9*" plant was found, but this time by Janet and Lee Kuhn, the former owners of J&L Orchids in Connecticut, while on a plant collecting trip organized in 1976 by Fred Fuchs. A very nice yellow-flowered *Cyrtochilum gracielae* Dalström (Fig.6), among several other rare and beautiful orchids new to science, have also been found in the same region. After some convoluted twists and

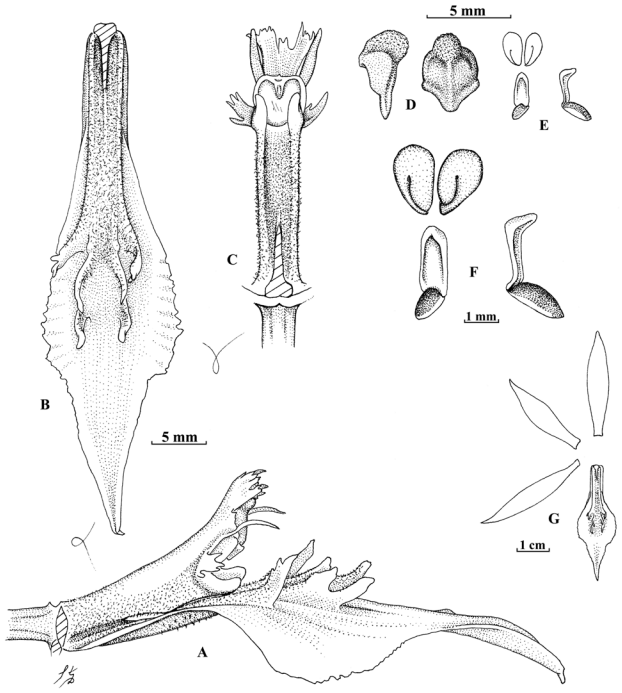


Fig. 3. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* 009 flower drawing by Stig Dalström

Fig. 4. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* 009

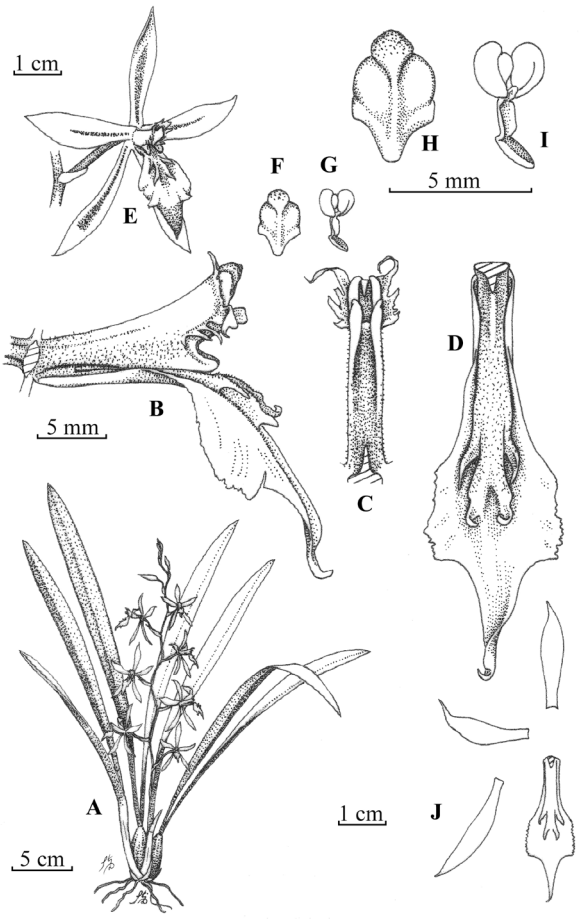


Fig. 5. O*dontoglossum dracoceps*
Typus drawing by Stig Dalström

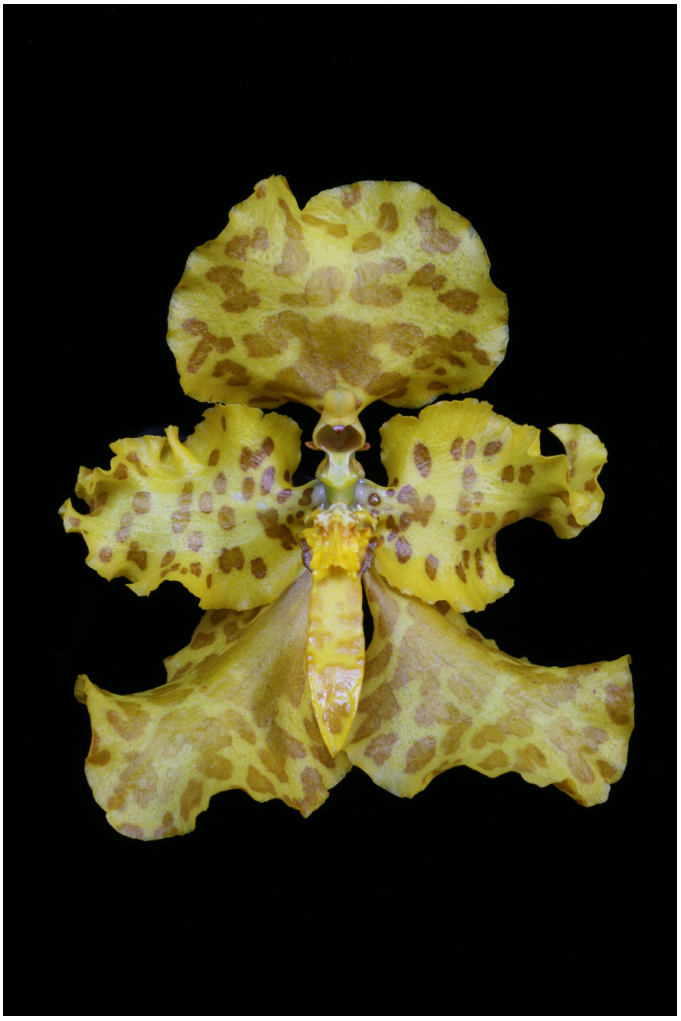


Fig. 6. *Cyrtochilum gracielae*

turns of fate, a division of the type plant of *Odm. dracoceps* eventually ended up in the collection of Jan Sönnemark in Sweden.

Some years later my plant flowered again and I contacted Jan Sönnemark to inquire whether his plant was flowering as well, and after a quick "Yes," Jan sent me a pair of pollinia and an effective pollination

Fig. 7. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* 009 × *Odm. dracoceps* J&L cross

(Fig.7) was subsequently done. John Gay did a very successful flasking in March 2000 and the

Fig. 8. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* 327: seedling first generation (see Fig.7)

first generation of *Odm. dracoceps* seedlings was born (Fig.8). Some enigmas complicated further pollination attempts, however. For example, how did seedlings of *Odontoglossum micklowii* Dalström end up in a flask of *Odm. dracoceps*? And a few years later; how did an oddball "hybrid" that does not look like anything seen before by anyone of us do the same (Fig.9)?

My greenhouse is small--too small to raise a quantity of *Odontoglossum* seedlings in an effective and successful way. Few of the first-generation seedlings consequently survived. For that reason, I wanted to make a new generation of seedlings, so a few years later I asked Jan again for pollinia from his *Odm. dracoceps* plant. However, the sad news that returned was that Jan's plant was dead, which made it impossible to repeat the same cross again. And sadly enough, a new problem arose, it was impossible for me to pollinate my mother plant with her children and vice versa. My attempt to outcross the children from the first batch with each other also failed. I tried a thousand times, using all conventional and unconventional methods such as pollination under full moon, using saliva, using physiologic sterile water, etc., but nothing helped. I found myself in the same dead-end street as in the past with the fruitless selfing attempts of *Odm. naevium* Lindl. Ecuagenera received some flasks of the original cross, but propagated *Odm. dracoceps* since then by meristem divisions as an outcross of the seedlings was also impossible for them.

The solution came out of the blue when *Odm. dracoceps* was serendipitously rediscovered in

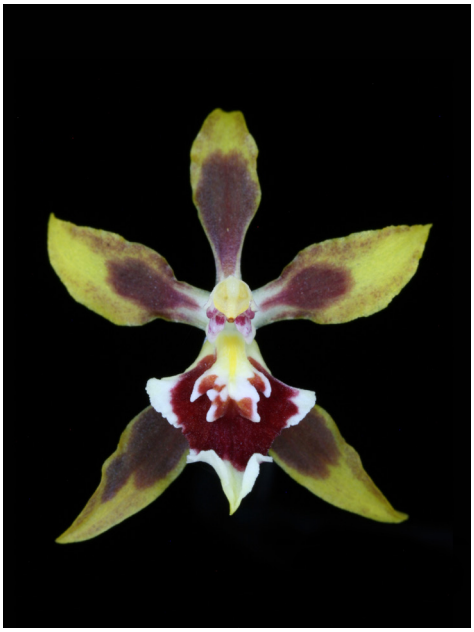


Fig. 9. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* x ???? = oddball

Fig. 10. Cerro Marron bell-pepper field, very endangered area (photo Stig Dalström)

Fig. 11. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* in situ

southern Peru. In a highly deforested area, at the edge of a bell-pepper field (Fig.10), a plant of this very rare species was located in full flower (Fig.11). Many other rare and endangered species, some new to science or recently described were also found such as *Odontoglossum mixturum* (Fig.12), *Odm. micklowii,* (Fig.13), *Masdevallia datura* Luer & R.Vásquez (Fig.14). *Masdevallia rojohnii* (Luer) Pfahl & A.Doucette (Fig.15), *Masdevallia goettfertiana* Dalström & Ruíz-Pérez (Fig.16) and a *Restrepia sp.* Kunth (Fig.17).

Fig. 12. *Odontoglossum mixturum*

Fig. 14. *Masdevallia datura*

Fig. 13. *Odontoglossum micklowii*

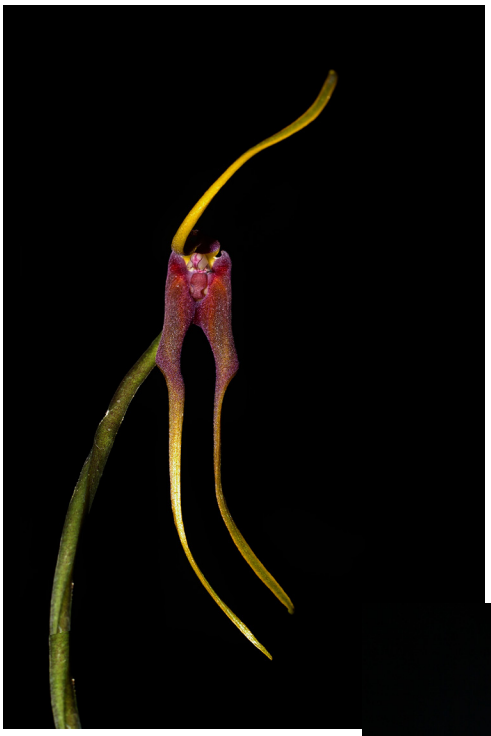


Fig. 15. *Masdevallia rojohnii*

Fig. 16. *Masdevallia goettfertiana*

Fig. 17. *Restrepia sp.*

When in 2019, a division of the Peruvian GD719 plant (Fig.18) flowered at the same time as my GD009 plant, as well as one of her children; GD327, in the hope to get more genetic differentiation the following pollinations were made: 009 × 719, 719 × 009 and 327 × 719 (Fig. 19). Very recently, 6 seed pods were harvested and seed samples flasked and distributed.

The least we can hope for is that *Odm. dracoceps* survives in other still-hidden patches of cloud forest and in some of our collections.

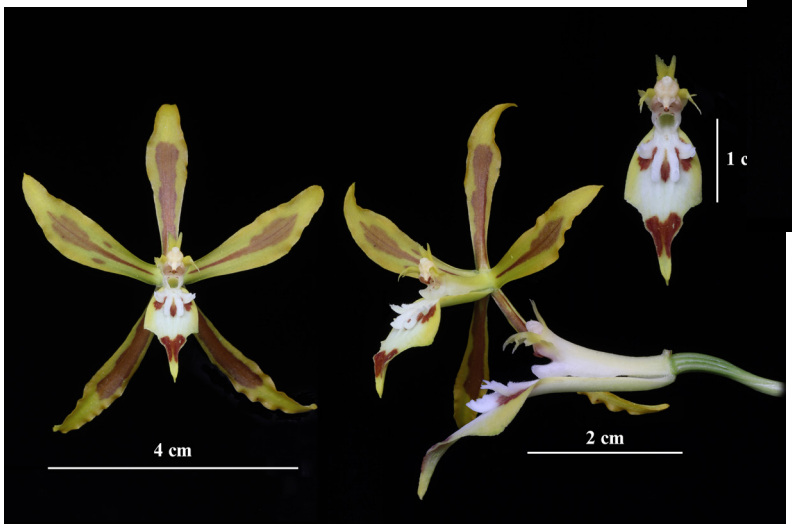


Fig. 18. *Odontoglossum dracoceps*, plant from Peru

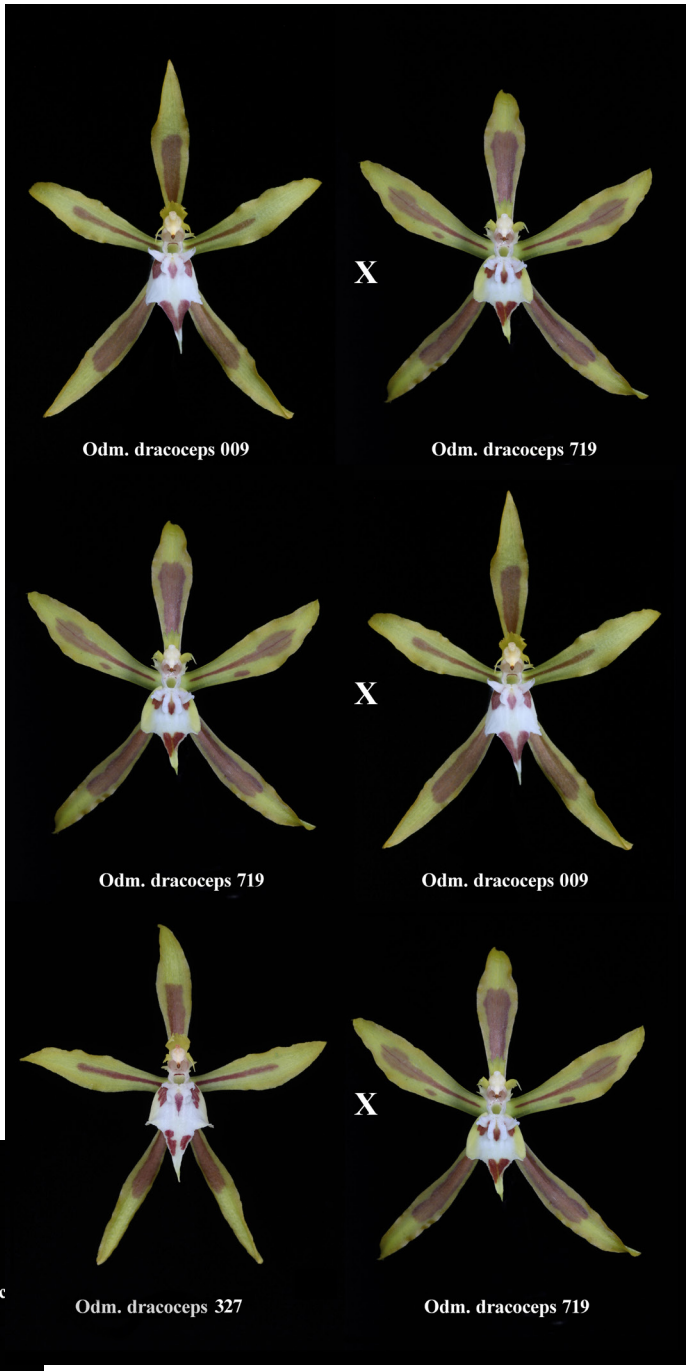


Fig. 19. *Odontoglossum dracoceps* crosses

Guido Deburghgraeve
Meersstraat 147,
1770 Liedekerke, Bélgica

Gerald McCraith OAM
(Medal of the Order of Australia)

Clive Halls
Mt. Beenak Orchids

There are not many who live to be a hundred years old, fewer still who are active and involved to the last. But Gerald was such a man.

Born 1909 in North Melbourne and died not far away in 2009. During the Second World War, he was posted to Darwin and was present during the bombing. Demobbed after the war, he and his brother Jack were commandeered to provide rabbits to feed the troops.

Gerald McCraith

The business developed into the biggest rabbit exporting company in the world. They developed cold storage, which made the collection of rabbit carcasses from all over Australia possible.

Gerald built two large glasshouses on his property in Essendon after the war. He grew a wide variety of orchids but always had a soft spot for odonts.

He joined the Victorian Orchid Club in 1931 and served as president from 1959 to 1962. A quiet man,

Gerald at his 95th birthday

who probably didn't like the limelight, was one of those people who worked tirelessly behind the scenes. One of his great loves was the Australian Orchid Foundation, which he co-founded in 1976 and for which was the first president. This organization is dedicated to the preservation, protection, promotion and cultivation of orchids. It provides grants for specialized work and research particularly for young people.

The seed bank is one practical way to preserve species both rare and not so rare. Growers from all over the world contribute seed to be dispersed through the foundation. I used it on several occasions. The small pinch of seed arrived in the post with perhaps a note from Gerald. No fee was involved and contributions to the AOF were gratefully received.

In 1969, the WOC was held in Sydney. Gerald was very involved in the organization, though I'm not sure in what capacity. Interestingly, Gerald attended every WOC since the 4th WOC in Singapore, 1963, to the 17th in Malaysia ,2002. That's a pretty good record of attendance that few could match. Interestingly, he

met David Sander, for whom I worked, in Singapore and in Sydney, a fact that came up in conversation with Gerald at a conference dinner.

Odontoglossums were Gerald's special interest. When he built his first glasshouses way back in the forties, they were pretty much what you would find in England at the nurseries he visited: wooden glazing bars, small glass panes, solid brick side walls and vented with top and bottom air. He quickly realized in Australia you needed cooling rather more than heating. Large evaporative coolers were installed. He used plenty of moisture retentive material and gradually he attained that cool, moist atmosphere that odonts prefer.

Of course, he grew far more than odonts. He had a particular fascination with the orchids of Papua New Guinea. Happily, they were ideal companions for his odonts. A particularly beautiful *Dendrobium* bred from two PNG species (*Dendrobium engae* × *Dendrobium convolutum*) is named after him. The flowers are green with a violet lip—it is striking to say the least. He also had a great fondness for *Dendrobium cuthbertsonii*, although it was even harder to grow than his odonts. Like most of us, he continued to try but their life span was short.

Dendrobium Gerald McCraith

But I think, though he loved species, breeding odonts was his obsession. He collected plants from all the leading nurseries in the UK--Charlesworth, Mansell & Hatcher, McBean's, and Sander. In those days, there was no quarantine to speak of and plants came by air post or hand luggage. Most plants survived, which is just as well considering the high price paid for good orchids in those days. Even in the sixties, cymbidium back bulbs purchased by Russell Martin from McBean's were in the region of £250 - 350 sterling each! Of course, cloning put an end to that and cyms. propagated by cloning were available for $10.

But odonts were not cloned easily, although some intergenerics were cloned by Vacherot & Lecoufle. In fact, David Sander had several processed by them in the sixties. One of these was a Cambria, and although it wasn't 'Plush', it showed these intergenerics were cloneable and flowered true to form.

Odontiodas, though, proved a step too far. No reliable clones were produced and to this day very few are able to be cloned with any success. So new stock has to be seedling stock. Well that's a good thing as seedlings are one of the best parts of growing orchids. I think we all hang out for our new seedlings every year--not all winners but glimpses of the future and what can be achieved.

Gerald was always looking for an opportunity to raise money for the AOF. So, when he started making hybrids in the *Oncidiinae* alliance, he could see the potential for selling flasks in excess of his own needs. Athol Bell, a New South Wales (NSW) grower, also ran a laboratory. He was co-opted to sow the seed. Odonts are not easy and need extra replating to get good growth. Athol flasked in big glass jars, and the plants were generally strong with decent roots, but you didn't get many in a jar. However, the price was right and for a good cause. Not only that, odont flasks were a scarce commodity so they sold like hot cakes.

I just checked OrchidWiz and Gerald registered 140 crosses of Odontoglossum alliance hybrids. I purchased some from most shipments but many crosses I see registered never came my way.

His best parent was undoubtedly *Odontioda* Trixero 'G'. Why 'G'? Who knows--maybe 'Gerald'--I like to think so. When it was mated to *Vuylstekeara* Moonee Ponds, we got *Vuylstekeara* Atunga Terrace. These were large showy reds with impressive lips. Moonee Ponds is a suburb of Melbourne close to his home in Essendon. He used Victorian place names for the majority of his registrations. Funnily enough, he never used Essendon. Maybe he was waiting for that extra-special cross to use it?

Odontioda Omeo (Point Lonsdale × Trixero 'G') was a very nice cross producing boldly marked flowers of a very traditional look. We still have a few of these that flower regularly and haven't lost their vigour over the years.

Oda. Omeo 'Beenak'

The best cross Gerald ever made, I believe, was *Odontioda* Murray River (*Odontoglossum* Moselle × *Oda*. Trixero 'G'). Personally, I flowered at least five award-grade seedlings. The most outstanding was 'Golden Fire'. It only got an HCC for me but won many shows.

An AD was awarded in Queensland, where it won Champion Oncidiinae at the Australian Orchid Conference. Another variety from this grex called 'Astrid', which belonged to Dieter Weise is a stunning deep mahogany edged with yellow. Truly outstanding, it has branching racemes and displays to perfection. It has an AM/OSCOV.

Oda. Murray River 'Golden Fire'

Oda. Murray River 'Beenak'

Oda. Murray River 'Astrid' AM/OSCOV.

Gerald made a number of crosses using the delightful *Odontoglossum rossii*. He had a particularly good variety of this species, which was no doubt responsible for the quality of the progeny. My favourite was Nar-nar-goon (*Odm. rossii* × *Oda.*Trixero 'G'), which was dark red with the typical *Odm. rossii* pattern markings. *Odontoglossum* Lois Joy (*Odm. rossii* × *Odm.* Moselle) was another cracker cross with freckled-yellow flowers. Lois was his granddaughter, I think.

Odm. rossii

Gerald had a very fine plant of *Odontioda* Florence Stirling, and he made a couple of crosses with it though I never got a flask. I saw it in flower. It was stunning but he didn't want to part with a division at the time. Now it's gone, along with *Oda*. Trixero 'G' and I believe all his breeding stock.

One of my fondest memories of Gerald is way back when Philip Altmann and I visited the BOGA show in England. The Odontoglossum Alliance group had a conference in conjunction with the show held in Cheltenham. Philip and I borrowed a car and duly got ourselves to Cheltenham, not without difficulty, negotiating traffic and one-way systems without GPS in those days. Gerald said he would meet us there the day before the show. By the end of the day, no sign of Gerald and Nell. Next morning, there was still no arrival. Just as we started the judging Gerald appeared. He had arrived in London expecting

*Odm.*Nar-nar-goon

*Odm.*Avoca
(Odm. Florence Stirling x Tontor)

someone to collect him, but no one did. He is 80 years old, remember. So, he hired a car and set off for Cheltenham some 300 km away without a map and no directions. Somehow, he managed to get out of London but didn't find Cheltenham. Well he said it was nice to see the English countryside and when he couldn't find Cheltenham, he called it a day and got a hotel somewhere else. It didn't worry him in any way, but I think Nell was a little less enthusiastic about the journey.

Gerald was a quiet man, a gentleman, and a plantsman. He never spoke ill of others and he didn't criticize. When you judged with him, he found good in flowers not the negatives. We once got allocated to judge 'cut flower terrestrials' at a conference show.

He took it on with complete grace and enthusiasm--I certainly didn't! "What do you know about these flowers" said Gerald. 'Not much' I said, "Well we better start learning," said Gerald.

Gerald brought odonts back into vogue when they were all but forgotten. Without his enthusiasm and the stock with which to breed odonts in the form of odontiodas rather than intergenerics involving *Oncidium*, they would have faded to oblivion. Of course, this type of odont is not easy to grow, particularly in Australia, so the customer base was somewhat limited. However, several nurseries such as Troweena Orchids in Tasmania, Warrnambool Orchids in Western Victoria, and Mt. Beenak Orchids continued on using seedlings from Gerald and imported stock from Geyserland Orchids, Mansell and Hatcher, and Keith Andrew.

But in the end, the number of growers with sufficient skill and willingness to make a growing area suitable declined. The more tolerant oncidium/brassia intergenerics took over and for good reason, as they are easy to grow, showy, and more-or-less tolerated outdoor conditions in many parts of Australia. *Colmanara* Wildcat was said to be grown as far north as Darwin and south to Hobart and everywhere in between--extraordinary.

At Mt. Beenak, we keep a small collection for enthusiast growers and personal pleasure. They have been a favourite orchid since doing my apprenticeship at David Sander Orchids in 1964. My first glasshouse responsibility at the nursery was the odont house. . no doubt because it was regarded as the easiest going of the various houses!

I sincerely believe this group of plants will see strong revival. The modern breeding of Bob Hamilton and Andy Easton will provide the form and colour we so love in traditional odontiodas. But with the introduction of species like *Odontoglossum trilobum* will come the ease of culture so much appreciated in the intergenerics. The future is bright, but as with all breeding, we only continue the work of hybridizers of the past. Gradually, slowly, we improve on what went before. Our hybrid register reminds us of these orchid forefathers. . . so famous that they only needed an initial for reference, Sander=S. Charlesworth=C.

What an inheritance, let's do the best we can with it. Gerald, we thank you for your part in the ongoing development of odontoglossums.

Gerald with Ron Parsons, his daughter Lois and Deiter Weise

Website Developments

Richard Baxter - ioaweb@icloud.com

Well, you have already navigated our website successfully to the Recent Journals section, but on the way you might have noticed some additional options that you have not seen before. So before signing off, why not take a few minutes to explore some of the introductions.

One of the new headings is Historical Items. This is a growing section of general interest documents from long ago, which will be updated on an occasional basis as and when they are identified. If you come across a very old document concerning *Odontoglossum* in particular, or orchids in general, do let the webmaster know so it can be considered for inclusion and sharing with others.

The roots of the International Odontoglossum Alliance go back to March 1986 with the inaugural Newsletter. After a slow start it was relaunched in 1988 followed by another gap of 4 years until 1992 when John Miller began creating regular newsletters every month or so. Of course, at that time, everything was hard copy (foolscap - remember that?). For the next 30 years, John collected an incredible compendium of information about species and hybrids, techniques, photographs, diagrams and general interest from around the World. Initially, John could publish only in black and white but as techniques improved, he included colour even though colour printing was in its infancy - and expensive. It was only in 2017 that our present editor, John Leathers, began to take over the reins and digital technology was introduced.

Realising that such an important collection of information is too valuable to be lost forever, we are truly grateful to Dr Richard Kaufman for lending his collection of a complete set of documents to the IOA for digital scanning. Fortunately, the IOA Treasury was able to fund professional scanning to include Optical Character Recognition. This means that once a document has been accessed it can be searched for specific words or phrases. Significant articles have now been indexed and the entire collection from 1986 right up to today's ISBN-registered journals are available for you to read on the IOA website.

TO BROWSE THIS TREASURE TROVE, click on the Publication Master Index heading on the second line of the screen and scan down the alphabetical list of articles until you see something of interest - note the publication date. Go along to the Publication Archive heading, pick the date you need, and that entire publication will appear for you to read or search.

Odontoglossum Alliance enthusiasts will enjoy many hours of reading.

A Note from the Editor

John Leathers

IOA Journal readers interested in contributing to the Journal are encouraged to do so! We accept articles of any length, including photos with captions, general comments and event announcements in most word processing and photo formats. Email them to: jjleathers@comcast.net. Add a note in the subject line, such as "IOA submission", to help identify the content as a submission for the journal.

Also, if you know someone who would like to receive email notification when a new journal is posted, have them contact the editor at: jjleathers@comcast.net with their email address.

We are in the process of creating a new bank account and PayPal account for donations to help support the Alliance. We hope to have it functional by the release of our next journal.

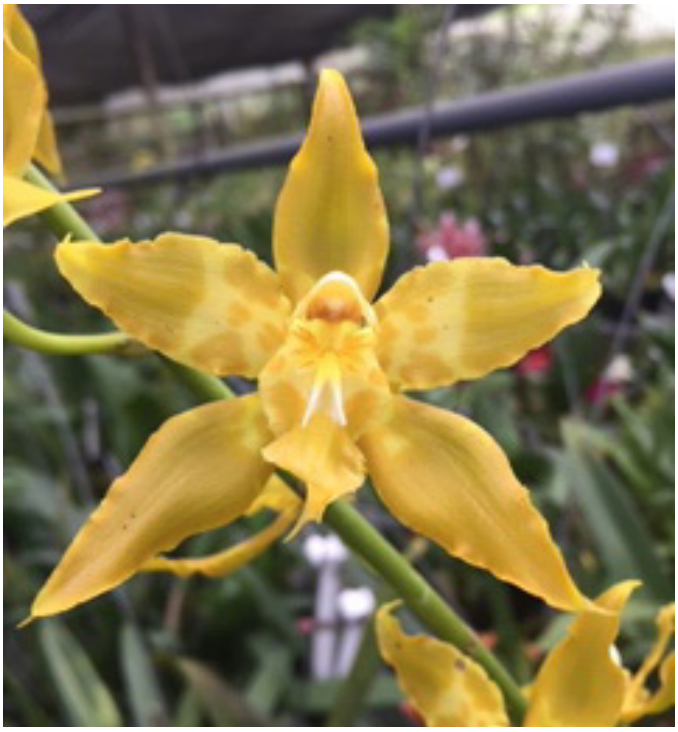
Why I hate Mark Chase and the Kewites.....

Andy Easton

Several months ago, we bloomed a mislabeled seedling odont at Colomborquideas. The inflorescence was produced from the apex of the leading bulb. It was a genetic alba and very appealing on first glance. Juan Felipe did a bit of sleuthing and narrowed the plant down to a hybrid, made twice, between two tetraploid

Odm. Rolfeae 4N

Odm. Rolfeae selections that were both crossed with a plant of *Odm. cristatellum* aureum that had caught my attention when I visited for the annual Festival Show in August. The xanthic alba *Odm. cristatellum* had been kept at the nursery rather than displayed because its inflorescence was only partially open. We had talked about what it might be hybridized with and one of the suggestions was a cross with a tetraploid *Odm*. Rolfeae. The suggested crossings were made after the show breakdown around mid-August of 2008.



Odm. cristatellum aureum

But how did we come by an alba result? E-mail to Bob Hamilton..... turns out that the *Odm. pescatorei/nobile* Bob used as a parent for Rolfeae 4n came from a *Odm. pescatorei/nobile* diploid outcross Keith Andrew made using his clones's 'Bulls' × 'Plush', one of these clones having been the parent Keith used to make the now famous *Oda*. Shelley 'Spring Dress' AM/RHS. Bob crossed Keith's *Odm. pescatorei/nobile* with a diploid *Odm. harryanum* and treated the seedlings with Oryzalin and we saw some stunning tetraploid results. We had suspected Keith's plant carried albinism because back in the Geyserland Orchid's days, I made a crossing of my *Oda*. Shelley 'Breath of Spring' with an alba-carrying odont and some albas eventuated. I initially thought we had a labelling problem whereas the labels were in fact correct.

When we examined the seedlings of the cross at Colomborquideas, two things stood out. Firstly, they were clearly the fastest growing odonts among our young stock. Always a promising sign! But then I started looking at them closely and a significant number of the husky seedlings were clearly visible as lacking any observable anthocyanin pigmentation. As one would predict in the crossing of an alba-carrying tetraploid with an alba diploid, roughly 25% of the young plants appear to be albas. Although the crossing

of *Odm*. Janus was registered as *Odm. cristatellum* × *Odm*. Rolfeae, the Colomborquideas iterations were made both ways.

Odm. Janus

We have so far seen only one alba bloom but there are other seedlings approaching blooming size that appear to be free of any anthocyanin pigment.

So now we do some research on the breeding record of *Odm. cristatellum*. Orchid World records a hybrid named *Odm.* Cristatellum, the offspring of *Odm. cristatum* × *Odm. kegeljani*, which was registered in 1878. Apparently in 1910, a Mr. Crawshay in England crossed this *Odm.* Cristatellum with *Odm*. Rolfeae and registered the hybrid as *Odm*. Janus.

What do we know about Crawshay? To give the man his full name, he was Lionel Henry de Barri Crawshay. He was a naturalist/botanist with a particular affection for orchids and specifically the Odontoglossum Alliance. As Bob's appended excerpt reports, Crawshay was a mad pollinator! Lionel's first hybrid registration was in 1900, *Odm.* Mirum which was *Odm. crispum* × *Odm.* Wilckeanum so essentially 75% *Odm. crispum.* His last registration was in 1920. This immediately piqued my curiosity. Sadly, my research confirmed that Lionel was in the British Army and lost his life in 1917, when his ship was torpedoed in the Mediterranean. An utter tragedy, of course wars are always like that but here was a great young orchidist, cut down in his prime at the age of 35! I could not help but be reminded of H.G. Alexander's only two sons who were lost in the Second World War. Had Lionel lived, it would not have been unusual for him to have lived into the 1960's. Can anyone imagine what his contribution to the orchid world might have been?

How totally appropriate a name for today's taxonomic mishmash given the two-faced characteristics of Mark Chase!

What about the real *Odm. cristatellum*? It was identified by the famous orchid taxonomist Leslie Garay in 1970 and despite the Kewites attempt to change its name to *Odm. kegeljani*, we will continue to use the correct name as per Garay. When one looks up *Odm. cristatellum* on OrchidWiz, there are only two hybrids of record, one a cross with *Odm. naevium*, made by Helmut Rohrl and registered as *Odm.* Quito in 2001 and the second, a cross to *Oda*. Nationhood, registered as *Oda*. Piti Duran by Ecuagenera in 2012. So, in actuality, the Colomborquideas hybrid is the third hybrid from *Odm. cristatellum* and in my opinion, the most interesting to date.

Since the first blooming of our cross, we have bloomed and recorded two more that are regularly pigmented seedlings. However, the fates have seen fit to give us a tetraploid as one of the colored pair. I say this without any cytological confirmation but the flower size, substance, etc. is a total giveaway. Needless to say, it is already making a pod or two.

As the IOA readers know, we will revert to the traditional naming of odonts in our soon to be launched registration system. I think we may find a catchy name for this particular hybrid..... maybe *Odm*. Chased Off???

An extract, which follows, from the 1904 Orchid Review visit to Lionel's greenhouses clearly shows that this young man was a future orchid giant. Knowledgeable and a very enthusiastic pollinator!

Reprinted from

THE ORCHID REVIEW – July 1904

ORCHIDS AT ROSEFIELD, SEVENOAKS

Seven years have elapsed since we had the pleasure of seeing the very interesting collection of De Barri Crawshay, Esq., situated at Rosefield, Sevenoaks, and much has happened in the interval. Seedling Odontoglossums are now to the fore. At the period mentioned we wrote, "Mr. Crawshay has twenty-eight seedlings in various stages, representing several distinct crosses". These, or the survivors, have since flowered, and been recorded, and at the present time there are hundreds, if not thousands, of others, of various sizes, and rarely have we met with a more striking example of progress in a proverbially difficult group. It was with the object of seeing this development that we accepted Mr. Crawshay's invitation to spend a weekend with him, and we were both pleased and surprised at what we saw.

Lionel Henry de Barri Crawshay
(Photo from Sevenoaks WWI Website - www.sevenoaksww1.org)

The Seedling House

We entered the house in which the seedlings are grown and were confronted with a batch of eight hundred plants, representing numerous crosses, all potted off and looking as thriving and healthy as possible. Some of these had already nice little bulbs and had progressed about halfway to the flowering stage. Others are smaller, and some recently pricked off, while on numbers of established plants suspended from the roof were batches of young seedlings, some germinating and others protruding their first leaf. In some cases, they were coming up almost as thickly as the proverbial mustard and cress. And not only were they on the surface of the compost, but in some cases, literally on the pots, where the seeds had been accidentally blown and afterwards germinated. In one case we noticed quite a batch growing below the rim of the pot and had the curiosity to count them. In a small space three inches long by half an inch broad there were over thirty, and examination with a lens shoved that they were securely anchored by little clusters of root hairs, while the first leaf was protruding in the usual way. Others were scattered about singly, so that the pots had to be handled with care for fear of crushing them. The green algae on the pots seem to suit them, and one was actually seen growing on a small slimy mass as if it rather liked it. Algae have sometimes been reckoned as among the worst foes of germinating Orchids, and the sight came as a surprise. In face of such a development it is difficult to realise how it was that *Odontoglossums* acquired the character of being difficult to raise from seed, and yet that is everybody's experience, even Mr. Crawshay's, at least until comparatively recently. It will interest a wide circle of readers to know.

How Seedling Odontoglossums are Raised

We will commence by sowing the seed, for the operation of crossing is well understood, and capsules of good seed are easily obtained. As soon as the capsule shows signs of maturity, by becoming yellow and beginning to open at the tip, it is cut, and the seed is scattered lightly on the surface of the compost of plants suspended from the roof. A small lead label is then clipped over the edge of the pot, containing a number, which agrees with the one in the record book, in which the history of every cross is carefully entered. The compost on which they are sown is practically fibrous peat (details are given later), as the partial surfacing of sphagnum is kept clipped short by a pair of fine pointed scissors as fast as it grows, to prevent it from choking the young seedlings, and in this care has to be taken not to damage the latter. From the moment the seed is sown the compost is never

allowed to get dry for a moment, and this condition is easily secured by the use of a fine sprayer as often as necessary. Roller blinds of thick canvas are used for shading, but only when necessary, as Mr. Crawshay is an advocate of giving plenty of light. Ventilation and damping down of course receive careful attention, the aim being to keep a moist, genial atmosphere without extremes of temperature either way. Germination takes place quickly, if the seed is good and the conditions right, but the young seedlings are not touched until they show the first true root. They are then pricked off on to pots of new compost, over which is placed for a few days an inverted glass pot, thus helping to preserve a moist atmosphere until they are established, at the same time affording ventilation through the central hole. These pots are practically bell glasses with a hole in the center, and in practice the insides are seen to be constantly covered with dew. After this the seedlings are potted on, as necessary, and treated like established plants. Of secret there is none, the whole thing resolves itself into providing the necessary conditions by constant care and attention, and anyone who can grow Odontoglossums well may hope to succeed. This, of course, does not apply to those who can merely keep them alive, and it should always be remembered that a little temporary neglect, which might leave no visible effect on established plants, may ruin a batch of delicate seedlings. Always remember that they must be treated like babies" is a motto for those who wish to raise seedling *Odontoglossums*.

THE RESULTS AIMED AT

The object in view is primarily to raise a number of handsome garden plants, but at the same time Mr. Crawshay hopes to throw some light on those beautiful wild forms known as blotched and spotted crispums, some of which, though not belonging to recognized natural hybrids are yet suspected to be of partially hybrid origin. There are seedlings from about sixty choice crosses, and a few of them should throw light on what may be taking place in Nature, though the majority are from forms which do not grow together in a wild state. One point which these experiments are expected to elucidate is how far reversion takes place in intercrossed forms. It may be remembered that *O*. X Wilckeanum crossed with *O. crispum* yielded an unspotted form undistinguishable from the latter, and that the result of *O. crispum* crossed with the blotched *O. crispum* "Crawshayana" was a poor unspotted *O. crispum*, and it is considered that if reversion of this kind takes place at all it will be specially demonstrated by the intercrossing of the finest varieties, which is now being carried on. Seedlings of *O*. Hallio-crispum re-crossed with *O. crispum* are interesting in this connection; also, a yellow loochristiense crossed with *O. crispum* v. aureum, and *O. crispum* Raymond Crawshay crossed with *O. triumphans* "Lionel Crawshay", and the reverse cross, all of which we noted. Blotched forms of *O. crispum* have also been intercrossed successfully. Another interesting point that occurs to us is that it will show the amount of variation between seedlings from the same seed-pod, a point which should be specially useful in the study of natural hybrids, and especially so if the parents happen to grow together in a wild state. *O*. X Adrianae has been crossed with *O. crispum* and *O*. X Andersonianum, and it will be extremely interesting to see the result. We may mention a few more of the crosses which we noted. *O*. Hunnewellianum × *Harryanum* was germinating in profusion, also *O. Pescatorei* × *Harryanum*, which is considered one of the most prolific of crosses. *O. Pescatorei* × *crispum* aureum had only been sown three months, but were already producing the first leaf, and a spotted form of the same crossed with a blotched crispum may repeat the history of *O*. X ardentissimum. A dark *O. triumphans* × *luteopurpureum* Vuylstekeanum should produce an interesting hybrid, also *O. naevium* × *crispum* Lehmanni.

SEED-PODS

In the general collection we noticed many good capsules in various stages, and some recently fertilised flowers, estimated at about a hundred in all, and it is significant that most of the latter had been crossed with the brilliant *Cochlioda noezliana*, which is now likely to be in great demand for hybridizing. *O. luteopurpureum* Vuylstekeanum and *O. crispum* Raymond Crawshay crossed with the *Cochlioda* should give some striking results if seedlings are obtained.

ESTABLISHED PLANTS

The longest Odontoglossum house is computed to contain over 2,500 plants, and some good things were noted in flower. First may be mentioned a large number of typical *O. crispum*, and these we learnt

were from a batch of imported plants, and most of them were to be sent away in a few days. A process of selection is constantly being carried on, quantities of imported plants being purchased and established, and when they bloom, those that do not come up to the standard are at once disposed of, sometimes only a very small percentage being retained. Others in bloom included a very fine *O. luteopurpureum*, bearing two spikes of ten and eleven flowers, the beautiful yellow variety Vuylstekeanum, a good spotted *O*. X Andersonianum with the lip shaped as in *O*. X mulus, *O. triumphans, O. crispum* Theodora, with ruby-purple blotches, a very prettily spotted *O*. X Adrianae with white ground, a good form of *O*. X Coradinei with white ground and purple spots, also yellow forms, one of them bearing a spike of twelve flowers with a very broad lip.

This plant is used for hybridizing and is said to bear seedpods every year. Other interesting things were *O. apterum* Crawshayanum, a very heavily spotted form, *O*. Hunnewellianum, two plants of the beautiful *O. naevium, O. polyxanthum, O. Hallii, O. triumphans, O. Rossii,* a remarkably fine form of *O. sceptrum*, and *O. Uroskinneri* "Rosefieldiense", a very dark and richly coloured variety. The variety album of the latter was bearing a capsule, with a curiously long pedicel, as the result of crossing with *O*. X Vuylstekei, but Mr. Crawshay states that this species is no good as a pollen parent. We noted also a fine example of *Oncidium crispum*, and the richly coloured *Cochlioda noezliana*. A few interesting things of which the flowers were not expanded were *O*. X Hallio-crispum with a spike of 13 buds (this was Mr. Crawshay's first seedling to flower), *O*. X loochristiense Theodora with 14 buds (said to have a white ground), *O*. X elegantius bearing a panicle with six side-branches, and *O*. X Crawshayanum. This is said to be a difficult plant to raise, and it may be noted that one seedling most resembles *O. Harryanum* in habit, the other *O. Hallii*.

CULTURE

The collection generally is in excellent condition, and it may be added that Mr. Crawshay pointed out his first *O. crispum*, purchased in bloom in February 1881, a very ordinary form, but which he would not part with on any consideration. His first *Odontoglossum* was purchased on December 21st, 1880, as an imported *O. crispum*, but it proved to be O. *luteopurpureum* when it flowered. It is still in good health, and Mr. Crawshay remarked that it once produced an inflorescence of 54 flowers. The plants are grown on open stages, beneath which is fixed a solid stage covered with broken coke, which is always kept wet. Some of the plants are stood on earthenware pedestals, but the centre is hollow, and as crocks are not used in the pots air can always get at the roots. Bracken rhizomes are used for drainage, a thick layer being placed in first, and the compost consists of fibrous peat, with a little sphagnum moss, and a few whole oak and beech leaves. These are not broken in any way, and being used in small quantity they are always separated by some peat fibre. They then decay gradually and feed the plants, while allowing water to pass away freely. Such a compost cannot be overwatered. The floors are of brick, and the side ventilators are shutters in the walls. Thick canvas on rollers is used for shading. Under such conditions the plants thrive exceedingly, but it was pointed out as a curiosity that the best growing position is about three feet from the door at the upper end of the house (this being built on a gentle slope).

Culture in Glass Pots

One point struck us as distinctly novel, and that is that some of the plants are cultivated in glass pots, simply differing from ordinary pots in the materials of which they are constructed. Thus, the conditions only differ in the admission of light to the roots, and one could see exactly what was going on inside, as in the case of bees in a glass hive. One could see the interstices between the bracken rhizomes, and under the influence of air and light the moss was actually growing below the compost, and the roots looked thoroughly healthy and had a greenish tinge. The glass is non-absorbent, and it is found that the plants need water much less frequently. A fine plant of *O. crispum*, which had been in glass for eleven months, was carrying a spike of fourteen fine flowers. *O*. X Coradinei Crawshayanum had carried three spikes, with an aggregate of fifty-one flowers. One plant, the second placed in glass, produced a spike of seventeen flowers, of which three were on a side branch. It consisted at first of two imported bulbs, and the new growths successively improved, while the last produced a double break besides the fine

spike mentioned. It is always growing and is a very pretty plant. This is not a mere fad; so satisfied is Mr. Crawshay with the result that he is having a lot of glass pots made, though at present they are dearer than ordinary pots, having to be made specially. Their use as bell glasses has been already mentioned.

Individual Peculiarities

It is curious to note that certain plants have their individual peculiarities. One plant of *O*. X mulus is a most robust grower and has perfect leaves on four successive years' bulbs (Mr. Crawshay once had five years' leaves on another plant). Another has been in the collection since 1884, but has never flowered, and it had eleven bulbs when bought none of which had flowered. It never rests; no sooner has one bulb finished than another growth begins. Mr. Crawshay has tried all ways to make it flower, but without success. Once he broke out three successive growths from the same bulb, and as it could not make another it simply broke from a back bulb, but no spike came. A piece has been sent away, but with no better result. It is believed to be a hybrid. Another curiosity pointed out was a plant of *O. crispum* producing spikes on two successive bulbs, the one from last year's bulb remaining dormant until now, a thing Mr. Crawshay had never seen before. A few plants were noticed having very purple leaves, particularly *O*. c. Venus, and this is partly attributed to plenty of light, but one plant is said to have the leaves always purple, though the flowers are white. One seedling, by the way, is ten years old, but has not yet flowered. It grows very slowly and has five remaining bulbs. Another is nine years old, and as it is from the spotted form which reverted, its behaviour is being watched with interest.

Secondary Hybrids

We have several times urged raisers of *Odontoglossums* to intercross the species and hybrids from the Bogota district, especially with the view of showing what secondary hybrids are like. We find that Mr. Crawshay now has several of these, including *O*. X Andersonianum crossed with *O*. X Denisonae and with a blotched *O. crispum*, also *O*. X Adrianae, *O*. X Coradinei, and *O*. X Denisonae all crossed with blotched crispums. The result of these crosses will be awaited with interest, as there is at least the possibility that some of them have occurred in a wild state.

Other Orchids

Our notes have been chiefly about *Odontoglossums*, which are prime favourites here, but there are others respecting which a few words must be said. One specially interesting plant in the seedling house is a seedling of *Promenaea stapelioides* v. xanthina, which we strongly suspect will prove the parentage of a natural hybrid. The seed was sown in February 1902, in the warm house, but none came up there, this one seedling being afterwards found in the cool house, in the crown of an Adiantum, where it must have been blown. In the Cattleya house we noticed *Odontoglossum citrosmum* carrying a fine spike, also good plants of *Miltonia spectabilis* Moreliana, *M.Regnellii*, and *M. cuneata*. Mr. Crawshay has tried year after year to cross these with Odontoglossums, but without success. We also saw good plants of *Zygonisia* X Rolfei, Zygopetalum X Gottei, and the seedling *Z. intermedium* × *Z. maxillare* "Gautieri", which took twenty years to flower. It however once met with an accident which nearly killed it. The type plants of *Laelia* X Crawshayana are also thriving. A few other well-known things must be passed over. A fine series of *Orchis maculata* varieties were flowering outside, making a brave show, with a few *O. latifolia*, and some sturdy *Listera ovata*.

Our notes on Mr. Crawshay's fine series of dried flowers and paintings must be held over for the present, as these notes are already longer than was intended, yet many interesting details have been omitted. But the seedling Odontoglossums were an education, and we believe that the details respecting them will be read with universal interest. We cannot conclude without a tribute to the ability of Mr. Stables, Mr. Crawshay's excellent gardener. The results speak for themselves. Mr. Crawshay thinks of building another house this autumn and judging by what we saw of the seedlings he will soon need it. And when they begin to flower there will be something to say.

Hybridizer's Notes

Andy Easton

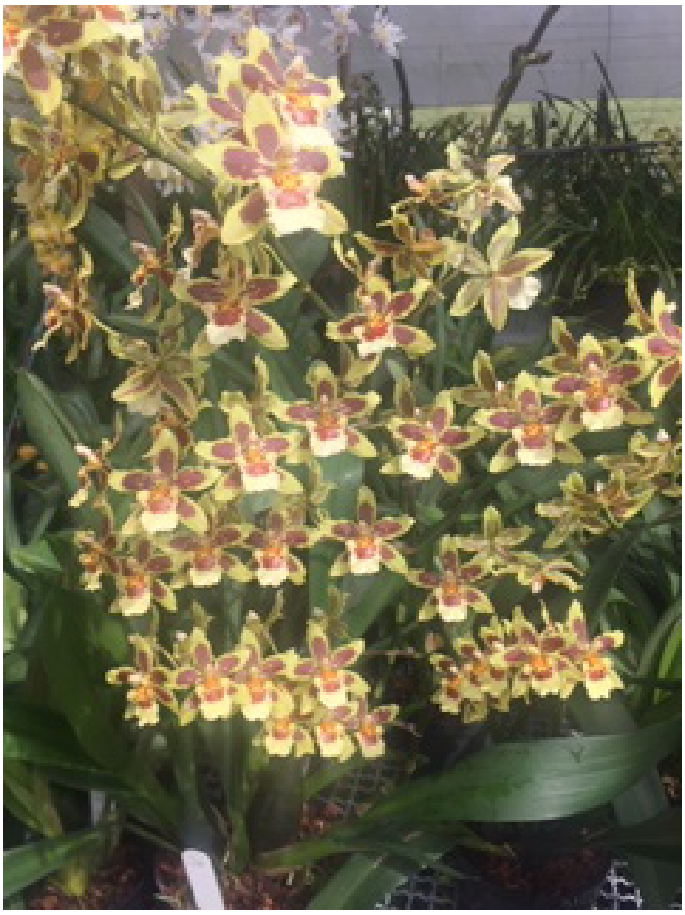
Odontoglossum Extraria 'Hawk Hill'

Take a good, long look at this lovely flower. Thank you, David Stead, for remaking the ancient hybrid between *Odm. crispum* and *Odm. laeve*, albeit with alba forms of both parents. Thank you, Hawk Hill, for keeping a plant in circulation. The original registration was made in 1920 and in the hundred

years since, the only hybrid of record was a cross of *Odm*. Extraria to *Odm. bictoniense* by Bob Burkey in 2009. There are no fertility issues with the line as Bob Hamilton has made a number of successful crossings from the alba form. When this could obviously be a valid pathway to some exciting, compact green Odontoglossum Alliance types, it is beyond strange why enthusiasts have not taken Extraria forward??? Sometimes you just have to shrug, pick up the pieces and move forward! Surely, we will be crossing this to something like *Odm. cristatellum* aureum var. at Colomborquideas this coming week!

Colmanara Catatante × *Odontoglossum* Pesky Trance 4n

A New Horizon hybrid from the Salinas days. . .it came down to Colombia in 2017 and got a bit lost. It was repotted in July and did it take off! Two big bulbs at opposite sides of the plant with this spray open now and another maybe six weeks away on the other bulb. Flowers about 3.5 cm in diameter and



lots of them! This is the only *Colmanara* Catatante hybrid I've made, and this may be the only surviving seedling so my experience is minimal. The spray is relatively compact and the flower color is OK. Maybe not the more orange tones that Catatante is loved for but a pleasing contrast and the flowers seem strong. It will never become a commercial clone but for an enthusiast, I think this would be a rewarding specimen.

Odontoglossum crispum 'Mem. Peter Wullner'

I am no expert on this particular *Odontoglossum* species but for me this is the finest *Odm. crispum* in its color type that I have ever seen! Bloomed out from a sib-crossing made by the late Peter Wullner, a great Colombian orchidist, this plant embodies for me the essence of a true *crispum*. Outstanding lilac coloration with the strongly crispate petals from which the species took its name. When you bloom a

plant in 2020 that matches in quality, paintings of the species dating back to the late 1800s, it's like being exposed to a treasure that one might presume was lost forever. I am heartily sick of supposed *Odm. crispum* selections that are obviously hybrids of *Odm. crispum*, a chicanery tracing back to Charlesworth's and continued to this day. This is an exciting and genuine plant, and we should be grateful for Peter's foresight in making the sib-crossing and sharing the seedlings with enthusiasts who would grow and maintain them.

Odontoglossum (Stonehurst Yellow × Tenue) 'Colombo'

I remember when *Odm*. Stonehurst Yellow was the hottest yellow Odontoglossum around. It represented the apex of Bert White's hybridizing in the type at Stonehurst in England. The grex was clearly triploid but being an *Odont.* it did make some seed, particularly as a pod parent. Although the registration for *Odm*. Tenue lists Lee Kuhn as the hybridizer,

the cross of *Odm*. Tenue is 100% Colomborquideas. Just a couple of days ago, I chanced upon this plant, which had recently been repotted and rejuvenated. It really is a stunningly good yellow and seems a strong grower and likely euploid. Better late than never, we have several good yellows in bloom and good yellow odontoglossums are never in plentiful supply so we will attempt some crossings in 2020!

Odontoglossum harryanum 2n-4n

We recently potted up about 30 seeding plants of *Odontoglossum harryanum*. They are lovely strong plants, collected plants from the only location where the species is found in Colombia. The site is commonly called "Carolina Cerro Montezuma". As the spikes started appearing, they were very impressive even at the bud stage. Then the blooms started opening

and about 15% were clearly tetraploid. Now these are collected seedlings, not plants grown from Oryzalin-treated flasks! Quite a surprise and some very fine selections are to be found in the group. The diploids are impressive in their own right, but the best tetraploid forms have quite the "wow" factor. Of course, we have made several crosses with them; the most interesting for me being the cross to a very fine tetraploid *Odm wyattianum*. Somehow, I doubt that we have seen the potential of either of those two species in hybridizing and the combo is something to look forward to with great anticipation.

Odm. Janus 4n?

Among the supposedly triploid seedlings of *Odm*. Janus, this plant stood out. Bigger, heavier substance etc. I did try crossings with several of the seedlings, this was the only one that made a pod and it actually has two good pods developing. Why would it be a chance tetraploid? Well, Odonts are at the cutting edge of orchid evolution and they just want to cross to a wide spectrum of related genera. The new genetic input is clearly advantageous to them on a multitude of ways.

Let's recall Janus briefly..... he was a God in Roman religion carrying two faces looking in opposite directions. But not "two-faced" in a modern negative parlance. Janus was said to see the future while remembering the past! Maybe he should be the patron Saint of orchid hybridizers?

And again, who registered *Odm*. Janus in 1910? That young Lionel Henry de Barri Crawshay. Yet another reminder of the futility of war and the realization that had he not been killed in WW1, he would have become a true "Janus", one of the hybridizers who moved forward building on his experiences in previous hybrid lines.

President's Message – Fall 2020

Bob Hamilton

Past, present and future, what a pleasure to read the Fall 2020 issue of our International Odontoglossum Alliance Journal (IOAJ) – a bright spot given the times.

Gerald McCraith

It's with fondness I read Clive Halls' tribute to Australian orchid pioneer Gerald McCraith. IOAJ editor John Leathers and I had the pleasure to meet Gerald McCraith at the 15th Australian Orchid Council event, held in Burnie, Tasmania, September of 2000. And, on this same trip we took the opportunity to visit Clive and Agi Halls' nursery, Mt Beenak Orchids.

Meeting Gerald was like meeting an old friend. He was, at 91, youthful and jocular. At dinner, Gerald recommended the barramundi, a fish native to North Australia as well as Brown Brothers Cabernet Sauvignon making his comradeship, the food and the wine all memorable. Our meetup did not end in Australia. John and I invited Gerald to stay with us if he should ever return to the US. To our surprise Gerald's immediate reply was, "I'll see you in a few weeks". It turned out Gerald was a featured guest at a Medtronics conference in Florida given he was the oldest patient to receive a new type of Medtronics pacemaker. Gerald said he'd make Medtronics change his flight so he could return to Australia via San Francisco. We live in the city of Berkeley, 8 miles across the San Francisco bay.

We picked Gerald up at the airport meeting up with him at the arrival gate. He was carrying a plaque under one arm given him by Medtronics as well as a photo of a young girl he met at the Florida conference. He was clearly smitten. We hosted Gerald for a week. Each day was packed with visits to nurseries and wining and dining. Gerald met with Terry Root at the Orchid Zone, Tom Perlite at Golden Gate Orchids, visited with the Director of the Conservatory in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park and toured the University of California at Berkeley Botanic Garden.

Gerald was packed with history and a great raconteur. Gerald McCraith is an unforgettable character, a risk taker, an entrepreneur, an Odontoglossum hybridizer and a man with a purpose.

Odontoglossum Cross Registrations

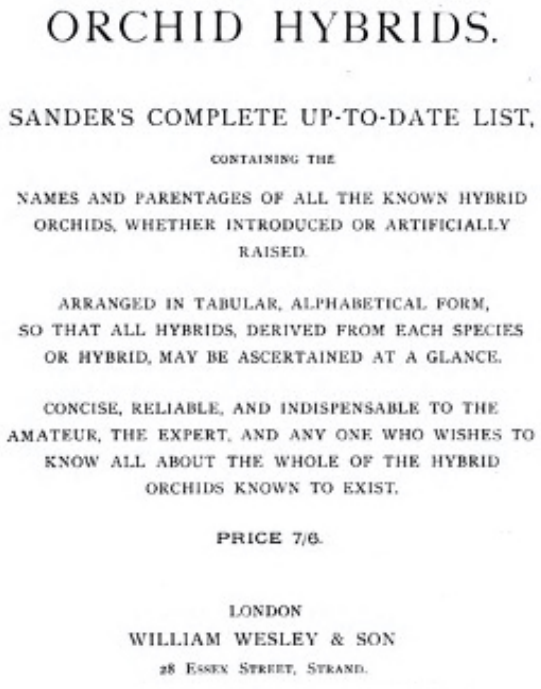
Andy Easton's spills the beans in his article, "Why I hate Mark Chase and the Kewites.....".

> "As the IOAJ readers know, we will revert to the traditional naming of odonts in our soon to be launched registration system."

Robert Culver of Seattle Washington, an odontoglossum grower and hybridizer for decades and a talented computer programmer has created a web-based application: wikiregistration.com Robert has self-funded this application after seeing the need to maintain a cogent and searchable database. Odontoglossum crosses can be registered at no cost and registrations will be listed in OrchidWiz, a PC based software application with a database of orchid species and hybrids, orchid photographs and botanical prints, and an orchid journal: https://www.orchidwiz.com/.

Henry Frederick Conrad Sander, founder of the orchid firm Sanders of St Albans, had the prescience to publish an orderly list of orchid hybrids in an effort to prevent chaos. list of orchid hybrids in an effort to prevent chaos.

Sander's Orchid List was a significant accomplishment, a gift to the orchid world. In the 1960's the Sanders family turned over stewardship of the list to Royal Horticultural Society, (RHS) for its continuation.



ORCHID HYBRIDS.

SANDER'S COMPLETE UP-TO-DATE LIST,

CONTAINING THE

NAMES AND PARENTAGES OF ALL THE KNOWN HYBRID ORCHIDS, WHETHER INTRODUCED OR ARTIFICIALLY RAISED.

ARRANGED IN TABULAR, ALPHABETICAL FORM, SO THAT ALL HYBRIDS, DERIVED FROM EACH SPECIES OR HYBRID, MAY BE ASCERTAINED AT A GLANCE.

CONCISE, RELIABLE, AND INDISPENSABLE TO THE AMATEUR, THE EXPERT, AND ANY ONE WHO WISHES TO KNOW ALL ABOUT THE WHOLE OF THE HYBRID ORCHIDS KNOWN TO EXIST.

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The RHS declares itself, "The International Registration Authority for orchid hybrids". Regrettably, the RHS fails to maintain a cogent, searchable record of orchid hybrids. It adapted new trends in taxonomy solely based on chemical genetic relationships without regard to those of us who have relied on their records. Classic horticultural genera were changed destroying the list's lineage. RHS orchid registrations are no longer a searchable horticultural record. To make matters worse, the RHS website's registration search function is primitive and difficult to use, requiring perfect syntax, without the convenience of simple computer tools such as dropdown menus and spelling suggestions.

To the rescue came OrchidWiz: https://www.orchidwiz.com/ a PC based software application with a database of orchid species and hybrids, orchid photographs and botanical prints. OrchidWiz is a terrific orchid search tool. It accommodates new taxonomy while preserving past naming conventions making it the database choice for knowledgeable orchidists.

To carry Odontoglossum alliance hybrid registrations forward, Robert Culver of Seattle Washington, an Odontoglossum grower and hybridizer with decades of experience and a talented computer programmer created a web-based application: https://wikiregistration.com/ Robert has self-funded this project after seeing the need to maintain an orderly, searchable horticultural database. Odontoglossum crosses will be registered for free. New Odontoglossum alliance registrations will be made available to OrchidWiz as well as other hybrid search sites such as https://www.orchidroots.com/, the AOS and the RHS.

> "I will be contacting the AOS, OrchidWiz and OrchidRoots and providing them the data from our system with each publication, even the RHS, if they are interested." Robert Culver

Our next edition of IOAJ newsletter will feature an article by Culver providing further details.

For my part it's Sayonara to the to RHS orchid registration system. The RHS is no longer my "International Registration Authority for Odontoglossum Hybrids". I encourage other Odontoglossum alliance hybridizers as well as other orchid tribes to consider using functional alternatives.

Parting Shots

This final section is for anyone who wishes to share a photo of their blooming odontoglossums and related species and hybrids. Your name and location will be included in the caption to give others an idea of where you are growing.

Oda. Enchanson 'Abie'
Ken Joy - Davis, California, USA

Odtna. Avril Gaye ‘Valemar’ Robert Culver, Normandy Park, Washington, USA

Oda. (Prince Vultan × Tribbles) ‘Lavendar Truth’ Robert Culver - Normandy Park, Washington, USA

Wils. Rajah
Robert Culver - Normandy Park, Washington, USA

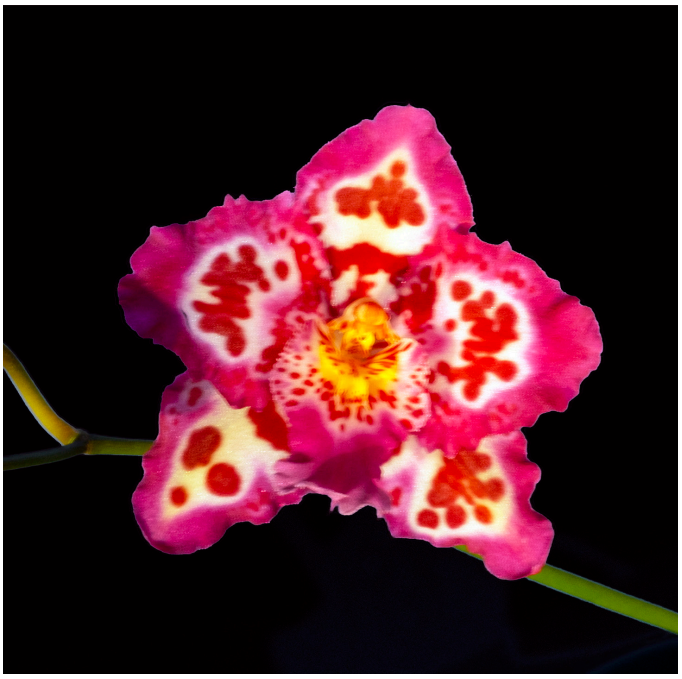
Oncidium forbesii - Chen-Hao Hsu, San Francisco, California, USA

Odm. Roy Hipkins 'Buttercup' Robert Culver - Normandy Park, Washington, USA

Oda. (Annette × Torlana) × Picotee) '597' Tim Brydon, San Francisco, California, USA

Odm. (Pesky Trance × Dr Tom) Robert Hamilton, Berkeley, California, USA

Oda. (Prince Vultan 'Sue' × *Odnia.* Bragelonne 'Plush' Juan Felipe Posada, Colomborquideas, Colombia, S.A.



Oda. St. Wood × Florence Stirling 'Celest' Tim Brydon, San Francisco, California, USA

Howardara Rustic 'Firecracker' × *Wils* Lyoth Robert Hamilton, Berkeley, California, USA