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THE ORCHID KEIKI

Newsletter of the Virginia Orchid Society
www.vaorchidsociety.org



© Marni Turkel

Angraecum lecomtei



Angraecum sesquipedale



© Marni Turkel

Schoenorchis buddleiflora

Marni Turkel will lead a Zoom Lecture on “Marvelous Monopodials”

Sunday, January 16th at 2 pm - There will not be an in-person meeting this time.

Most of the orchids we see at shows and on show tables are sympodial where one growth finishes and a new one starts from the rhizome. This presentation will focus on those with a monopodial growth habit: those where the plant grows upward from a single point. It adds leaves to the apex each year and the stem grows longer accordingly.

This talk will focus on the wonderful variety of monopodial genera of great interest to orchid growers. It includes miniatures as well as some rather large species, some well known and others not often seen. It will cover aspects of culture in general and individual species. You will see images of flowers up close as well as whole plants. There should be something of interest to growers from all levels of experience.



© Marni Turkel

Gastrochilus formosanus

Marni Turkel (pronounced tur KELL) is a native of the San Francisco Bay Area and has been growing orchids since 1980. She grows in four greenhouses in Santa Rosa with approximately 1250 sq. ft. of growing space. Her main interest is in miniature species but plenty of larger plants have crept into the collection as well. Marni has been a contributor to *Orchids* magazine with her series called 'Well Worth the Space' and 'Give It a Rest'. Her articles have been translated into Dutch, German, Portuguese and Swedish for international publication. Photographs of her plants have been featured in articles in noted orchid publications including *Orchids Magazine*, *Orchid Digest*, *Richardiana*, *The Orchid Review*, and *The Australian Orchid Review*. For the last few years she has been sharing her photographs and knowledge on *OrchidsForum.com*. Starting in 2009, Marni expanded her work with orchids to include propagation of orchids from seed and has set up a flasking lab of her own to take the process from start to finish and sell flasks of many of the orchids species in her collection. After working for over 43 years as a potter, she has retired from ceramics to pursue orchids full-time.

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Show Co-Chairs

President's Message

Hello VOS members!

Happy New Year to all VOS Members!! While the caution level has risen in the recent month, we are fortunate that we can still meet through Zoom. Our January meeting will be a Zoom meeting in order to protect our members and still move forward with an exciting learning experience.

We have a signed MOU with Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and they have been extreme generous in their support of the show. In addition to underwriting several costs, LGBG is also providing a free pass to members – so be sure your dues are paid up. The show committee will be doing a walk through with LGBG staff in February – we are very excited!! Our show committee has been busy finalizing vendors, participating societies, layouts, marketing, and gathering volunteers. While we have a lot of members signed up to help, we do have a few spaces where we need more volunteers. (The sign up sheet is attached to the email transmittal—please email me to add your name to the list.) Volunteers will receive passes for the time they work should they need to be in the garden. Please support your VOS by volunteering for open positions on the volunteer listing. Donations for various awards is another option to support the organization (see page 3).

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the Belmont venue in February. Stay safe.

Sincerely,
Donna



Leptotes bicolor as posted on
Gold Country's Facebook page.

February's Zoom Meeting:

Alan Koch of Gold Country Orchids, has committed to a Zoom presentation for our February meeting. His topic will be "What's New in Miniature Cattleyas." Attached to the February newsletter email transmittal will be two plant listings from Gold Country Orchids as a temptation to expand your orchid collection. He will offer a discount for purchases over \$150, and shipping will be at cost.

www.facebook.com/GoldCountryOrchids

Our Meeting Location!
Belmont Recreation Center
1600 Hilliard Road
Richmond, VA 23228



Covid-19 Compliance: Belmont's covid-19 restriction: **Wearing masks is required for all visitors in Henrico County facilities regardless of vaccination status, except when eating or drinking.** Thank you for helping us maintain the health and safety of our members, but please do not come if you feel ill. **And respect Belmont's rule that no money (cash, check, or charge) is permitted to change hands while on Belmont property.**

You Too can be a Show Trophy Sponsor!

As is the tradition with our AOS judged shows, we invite members to sponsor one of our “Best of” trophies:

Best Cattleya
Best First Bloom Seedling
Best Miniature
Best Species
Best Paphiopedilum
Best Phragmipedium
Best Weird & Wonderful

Best Dendrobium
Best Oncidium Alliance
Best Miscellaneous Genera
Best Specimen Plant
Best Phalaenopsis
Best Vanda Alliance

With a donation of \$25.00 donation, you can sponsor a special award to the winner of one of the categories above or name your own category. A card with your name(s) as sponsor will be included with the “trophy.”

Since the VOS will not hold an in-person meeting this month, please send your name and the name of the trophy you choose to sponsor to daunepoklis@gmail.com and mail a check to Paul McNamara, 2715 Semmes Ave., Richmond, VA 23225. Note on the check that you are sponsoring a show trophy and specify the trophy.

Don't miss these AOS webinars in January:

Register for the webinars on the AOS website: www.aos.org

Tuesday, January 18, 2022 8:30 PM EST



Greenhouse Chat:

Join Dr. Ron McHatton, AOS Chief Science Officer, as he answers your questions about all things orchids. Have your questions answered by our resident orchid expert! Please send your queries to greenhousechat@aos.org two days prior to the chat.

Open to all.

Tuesday, January 25, 2022 8:30 PM EST



Judges' Forum:

What is an 'accepted' species or variety? How does that differ from a validly described variety or forma? What effect do these have on award descriptions? How can a genus name change affect the spelling of a species? What about hybrids? These questions and more will be clarified on January 25 when Jean Ikeson conducts the next Judges' Forum.

Member Exclusive Webinar.

Orchids from our December Show Table

These pictures were received without plant names. Email the names to virginiaorchidsociety@gmail.com so our webmaster can update our "pictures taken by members" on the website. The pictures will be posted with plant names but will not identify the grower.



Orchid Number 1



Orchid Number 2



Orchid Number 3



Orchid Number 4



Orchid Number 6



Orchid Number 5



Orchid Number 8



Orchid Number 9



Orchid Number 7

Vandaceous Hybridizing at R. F. Orchids

Robert Fuchs

Reprinted with permission from "Orchid Digest," O-N-D 2017: www.orchiddigest.org

MY INTEREST IN VANDAS and their relatives has been a lifelong passion. These stunning orchids bloom in a wider range of colors and patterns than any other group and I have devoted decades to breeding better vandaceous orchids.

But what constitutes better vandas? Classic vandas generally have very large flowers, but the plants are usually very large as well, often too large for growers without big greenhouses. Most of the classic hybrids come in a very limited range of colors and many bloom only once a year - twice if you're lucky. So, my goal has always been to create hybrids with relatively large, long-lasting flowers on smaller plants, in clear, vibrant colors, and to see these improved flowers several times a year. Ideally, I want to overcome the shortcomings of the ancestral species, using combinations that present the best qualities and diminish the less desirable ones.

Classic vandas have two main species in their ancestry: *Vanda sanderiana* and *Vanda coerulea*, with distant influences from just a few other species in the genus. *Vanda sanderiana* is a large plant with large flowers, but the inflorescence is typically crowded and, while the flowers are usually round and flat, there's a distinct difference in the size of the flowers from the



V. coerulea 'Crownfox Sky'

bottom to the top of the inflorescence. The substance can be good, and color and pattern in the best examples are very attractive. *Vanda coerulea*, on the other hand, has much better flower spacing on a longer inflorescence, but the substance is typically thin. In the best cultivars, the intense blue-violet color and beautiful tessellated markings are extremely desirable.



V. sanderiana 'Athena' AM/AOS

The primary hybrid of the two is *V. Rothschildiana*, which was originally made in Europe in 1931. This cross has been re-made many times using improved parents, and many cultivars have been awarded. Generally, the floral presentation is better than in either parent, and the colors are very attractive. There are even pink forms descended from the rare pink *V. coerulea*.



V. Rothschildiana 'Pink Sapphire' AM/AOS

Over the decades, hundreds of *Vanda* hybrids have been registered, using combinations of the same parents in an attempt to increase the flower size, and improve color and spacing on the inflorescence. But this line of breeding didn't do much to reduce the plant size, which was always one of my goals, nor did it add any significant change to the limited color palette of the hybrids. For many years, vandas came in basically three colors: pink (or two-tone, like *V. sanderiana*), blue or blue-purple, and yellow. We could, and did, improve these colors, producing hybrids with intense raspberry flowers, grape-purple flowers, and clear yellow flowers. Some examples are *V. Ute Reschke* (deep raspberry), *V. Diana Tamayo* (dark purple), and *V. Suzanne Mullane* (clear yellow). But they are the same large-flowered, pink/blue/yellow vandas on large plants, blooming once or maybe twice a year.



©RF Orchids

V. Ute Reschke
(Kasem's Delight x Fuchs Southern Belle)



©RF Orchids

V. Suzanne Mullane
(Fuchs Oro x Crownfox Gold)



©RF Orchids

V. Diane Tamayo (Liz Letzler x Mollie Zweig)

Growers—and judges—put a high value on large flowers. Increasing the flower size is not all that difficult; we used the largest-flowered cultivars as stud plants and over multiple generations, added several centimeters to the flowers' width and length. But this didn't do anything for the plant size.

Decreasing the plant size is easy, too, using the appropriate stud plants, but the biggest gains in this direction came from introducing smaller-growing species into the mix. The tradeoff, however, is smaller flowers. The best of the smaller-growing species are several of the ascocentrums (now vandas), particularly *Vanda* (Asctm.) *curvifolia* and *Vanda* (Asctm.) *garayi*, and *Rhynchostylis coelestis*. Taxonomic changes in 2012 moved *Ascocentrum* into *Vanda*, so all of the *Ascocenda* hybrids are now vandas. Although they are classified as vandas now, I will use *Ascocenda* to distinguish those hybrids that include one or more of the former *Ascocentrum* species in the pedigree, as the influence of those species is very important for some of our breeding goals.

Like many breeders, we experiment with many *Ascocenda* hybrids, and often the results are very, very good. Although the flowers are smaller, there are a lot more of them, in significantly brighter colors, and many of these hybrids can and do, with appropriate care, bloom multiple times a year. Plant size is also greatly reduced. Of course, the ever-present desire for larger flowers means crossing them back onto large-flowered vandas, so plant size started to increase again, but many maintained a manageable size.



©Greg Allikas

V. *curvifolia* (Asctm. *curvifolium*)



©RF Orchids

V. (Ascda.) Frances Lindner 'Crownfox'
(Kasem's Delight x Fuchs Southern Belle)

We also saw the appearance of many new colors in the hybrids and some very attractive patterns, too. Now we have orange and red vandas, some with spots in contrasting colors. *Rhynchostylis coelestis* hybrids (*Vascostylis* at one point, *Vandachostylis* now) have beautiful upright, cylindrical stems of well-shaped flowers in bright colors on moderately-sized plants. The sheer number of flowers offsets the smaller size. Again, it's possible to breed larger flowers in these hybrids, but the plant size starts to increase, too.

Spotted ascocendas were all the rage about 15-20 years ago, and there are many fine examples of this trend in hybridizing. Most of them tend to have yellow or orange flowers with darker red-orange or even brick-red spots. Because they are popular, we continue to make a few of these crosses. One of our more recent hybrids in this line is V. (Ascda.) Frances Lindner (Ascda. Ellen Wells 'Crownfox' AM/AO S x V. Crownfox Keylime 'Xena' AM/AOS). One cultivar, 'Crownfox Orange Glow' FCC/AOS was honored with the AOS's Merritt Huntington Award in 2014.

The introduction of *Ascocentrum* species brings many positive new traits to vanda hybridizing, including floriferousness. We always look for more flowers, and many of these hybrids fit this bill very well indeed.

"Classic" vandas average eight to ten flowers per inflorescence, while, in the early hybrids, ascocendas average 20-40 flowers per inflorescence. Some *Vandachostylis* hybrids, with the influence of *Rhy. coelestis*, can bloom with even more flowers and the plants are typically quite compact compared to the standard classic vandas.

We also consider temperature tolerance. Most classic vandas are very warm-growing, which is not an issue for growers in south Florida or Hawaii, but it's a major challenge for most orchid enthusiasts elsewhere. Using some cooler-growing species in breeding programs can help improve temperature tolerance. *Vanda coerulea*, which is more of an intermediate grower than *V. sanderiana*, has been used for more than 100 years, not only for color and flower spacing but also for temperature tolerance.

Several other *Vanda* species are more temperature tolerant than *V. sanderiana*, including *V. denisoniana* and *V. tessellata*. Several of the former *Ascocentrum* species, notably *Asctm. [V.] ampullaceum*, are slightly more cool-tolerant than typical vandas (although this species has not been used much in hybridizing), and *Rhy. coelestis* also imparts some temperature tolerance as well.



Vandachostylis (Neostylis) Fuchs Ocean Spray
(*Vandachostylis* Lou Sneary x *Rhynchostylis* *coelestis*)

The most cool-tolerant of all is *Neofinetia*—now *Vanda*—*falcata*, a very compact grower native to Japan. It is very dominant for flower shape in the first generation, but subsequent generations show less dominance. *Vandachostylis* (Neostylis) Fuchs Ocean Spray (*Vandachostylis* Lou Sneary x *Rhy. coelestis*) is an example. Another bonus, in addition to plant size, is the fragrance of the hybrids of *Vanda falcata*. Fragrance is always desirable, and, unfortunately, many typical *Vanda* hybrids are not particularly fragrant. We also used *V. tessellata* to produce fragrant, more temperature-tolerant hybrids, but the fragrance is sometimes lost a generation or two after the original cross.

I've had a longtime interest in intergeneric hybridizing, so in addition to vandas and *Vandachostylis* (Ascocendas by *Vascostylis*), we have produced many vandaceous intergenetics using *Aerides* and *Renanthera* species, and more recently, *Vanda* (*Christensonia*) *vietnamica*.

Intergeneric hybridizing in the vandaceous alliance has a long history, going back to the mid-1940s, but these early hybrids used some of the smaller-flowered *aerides*. I

preferred to breed with *Aer. lawrenceae*, which is the largest—plant and flower—in the genus. That affects plant size in the progeny but many of the hybrids have beautiful, waxy, fragrant flowers. I observed that *Aer. lawrenceae* tends to suppress the color in some crosses with *Vanda*, so that the results are more muted pastels. They can be gorgeous, nevertheless. However, many *Aeridovanda* hybrids are sterile, so breeding with them is a bit of a dead-end.

We also made some beautiful *Christiara* hybrids (*Vanda* x *Ascocentrum* x *Aerides*); these are mostly *Aeridovandas* now, but nearly all of them are sterile, too, so that line of hybridizing is uncommon today. It's unfortunate they are sterile, because the introduction of the *V. curvifolia* (*Ascocentrum curvifolium*) into the mix gave us a wonderful palette of color, easily overriding the muting influence of the *Aer. lawrenceae*, and reducing the plant size, too. There are some fabulous *Christiara*/*Aeridovanda* hybrids on the books, and we have many awarded.

We had great success with improving color in vandas, moving on from the early two-tone pinks and tessellated blues to really intense solid fuchsia, deep garnet-red, gorgeous grape-purple, and clear chrome-yellow, but this



Aeridovanda Cynthia Lee
(*Aerides lawrenceae* x *Vanda* Barbara Hanick)



V. (Ascda. Copper Pure 'Crownfox'
HCC/AOS (Fuchs Gold x Gordon Dillon)

was still more or less the same palette if greatly improved. Adding *V. curvifolia* to the hybrids gave us warmer reds, oranges, and some new patterns, but what else could we do to expand the color range?

In breeding cattleyas, it has long been known that crossing yellows onto purples would intensify the purple colors. But in vandas, the result of this kind of cross was, more often than not, disappointing. That's a polite way to say "muddy," and the hybrids weren't registered. But Pure Orchid Farm, a breeder in Thailand, crossed *V. (Ascda.) Fuchs Gold* with *V. Gordon Dillon* and registered the cross as *Vanda (Ascda.) Copper Pure* in 2002.

Now, this was a very interesting cross (we have AOS awards on two different cultivars); not all the progeny were muddy. We gave some thought to crossing yellows with purple/pinks to see what would result. Maybe the trick was using the right stud plants. We began to explore the possibilities of these combinations. In 2004, we registered *V. Betty Baderman*, a cross of (Barbara Krantz x *Crownfox Beauty*). But the breakthrough cross, registered in 2006, was *V. Fuchs Sunrise* x *V. Doctor Anek* (both proven stud plants in other breeding lines). We registered this hybrid as *V. Judy McKemie*. We saw new "art shades" of copper and bronze, and two cultivars have received flower-quantity awards from the AOS. This was a very interesting



V. Betty Baderman 'Crownfox'
(Barbara Krantz x Crownfox Beauty)



V. Fuchs Sunrise 'Robert'
(One of the parents of V. Judy McKemie)



V. Judy McKemie 'Crownfox Cinnamon'
HCC/AOS

development in vanda flower color, and some other "experimental" crosses began to bloom. In 2007, we registered *V. (Ascda.) Crownfox Avocado Honey*, a cross of (*V. (Ascda.) Siam Spots* x *V. Doctor Anek*). This hybrid received an AQ/AOS in 2008, and five cultivars have received flower-quality awards from AOS.

In 2011, we registered *V. (Ascda.) Ken Slump*, a cross of *V. (Ascda.) (Crownfox Yellow Sapphire* x *V. Crownfox Goliath*). Several cultivars were awarded by the AOS, including



V. Ken Slump 'Africa'

'Crownfox' AM/AOS in 2013, and 'Joburg' GM/21WOC in 2014 at the 21st. World Orchid Conference. Unfortunately we don't have a good image of 'Joburg' but the pictured cultivar 'Africa' is very similar to the gold medal winner at the 21WOC in Johannesburg.

In 2011, we also registered *V. Robert Moraru*, which is (*Crownfox Gold* x *Doctor Anek*). The cultivar 'Pomegranate' AM/RHS was recognized during the 2016 Chelsea Flower Show.



V. Robert Moraru 'Pomegranate' AM/AOS
(Crownfox Gold x Doctor Anek)



©Greg Allikas

V. (V. (Ascda.) Ken Slump 'Crownfox' AM/AOS (Crownfox Yellow Sapphire x Crownfox Goliath)



©RF Orchids

V. (Ascda.) Eloina Zayas-Bazan (Muang Thong x Eduardo Marcellini)



©RF Orchids

V. Robert's Delight 'Garnet Beauty' FCC/AOS (Kasem's Delight x Madame Rattana)

More recently, our cross of V. Will Riley (Crownfox Gold 'Elegant' FCC/AOS x Crownfox Goliath 'Full Moon' AM/AOS) received an AQ (Award of Quality)/AOS at a local show in April 2017. The Award of Quality is awarded once to a strain (the result of a mating of specific cultivars), exhibited by a single individual as a group of not less than 12 different clones. At least one cultivar of the exhibited strain must receive, or have received a flower quality award. Four of the plants in the group of 12 received individual flower-quality awards: V. Will Riley 'Crownfox' FCC/AOS, 'Bonnie' FCC/AOS, 'Crownfox Pink Lemonade' AM/AOS and 'Crownfox Raspberry' AM/AOS.

This relatively new line of vanda breeding—crossing classic deep pink or two-tone flowers with yellow flowers—has produced some incredible new colors in large-flowered Vanda hybrids. We have received dozens of flower-quality awards from the AOS and RHS on these hybrids. The new copper and bronze shades have proved to be extremely popular and certainly make an interesting change from the classic pinks, blues, and yellows.



©RF Orchids

Aeridovanda (Christieara) Carlos Manuel Rivero (Aerides lawrenceae x V. Linda Kraus)



©Ken Kuligowski

V. Will Riley 'Bonnie' FCC/AOS (Crownfox Gold 'Elegant' FCC/AOS x Crownfox Goliath 'Full Moon' AM/AOS)

So, what have we accomplished in nearly 50 years of hybridizing vandas and their relatives? We have larger, better-formed flowers such as V. Robert's Delight 'Garnet Beauty' FCC/AOS as well as on smaller plants such as V. (Ascda.) Eloina Zayas-Bazan. We have more flowers, more often: Aeridovanda Christine Patton. We have new colors and patterns: Aeridovanda (Christieara) Carlos Manuel Rivero.

Looking back, I think we've accomplished a lot. There's more to do, and we'll continue to pursue improved vandaceous hybrids. The plants are still larger than we'd like, and adding fragrance to the hybrids would be a bonus.

Care and Culture

Temperature: They are warm growers with daytime conditions of 65°F (18°C) or higher. They will continue in active growth anytime of the year if given warm temperatures and bright light. Night temperatures should not usually be lower than 55°F (12°C) for extended periods.

Light: Maximum sunlight should be given with only enough shade to keep the temperature within the appropriate range and protect the foliage during the middle part of the day. For our greenhouses in South Florida, we use 46% shade cloth covered with six mm clear plastic on the top and sides of greenhouses, producing about 50% shade. Most are not suitable for windowsill or under-lights growing because of their light and watering requirements.

Air Movement: These orchids are epiphytes and need strong air circulation.

Water: Vandas in slat baskets should be watered daily preferably early in the morning. The root mass should be dripping wet. On hot, sunny days around 80% humidity is appropriate. Water more sparingly in winter, during long cloudy spells, or after repotting. In any season, avoid watering plants late in the afternoon.

Fertilizing: Vandas are heavy feeders. Once a week during the growing season, feed a solution of a complete, balanced water-soluble fertilizer such as 20-20-20. High-nitrogen fertilizers will inhibit flowering and are not recommended for these orchids. All plants should be flushed thoroughly with plain water once a week to remove built-up salts.

During the winter (non-growing season), feed every two weeks. Also, at every third feeding year-round we substitute a "bloom booster" (10-30-20). And once a month we add 1/4 teaspoon of SUPERthrive, a concentrated vitamin and hormone solution for plants, to each gallon of fertilizer solution.

Potting: Vandas will grow well in any porous medium if properly aerated. The roots must not be smothered by tight potting or soggy medium. We prefer baskets with little or no additional growing medium, but pots can be used if aeration and drainage are good. Plants should be suspended so that the aerial roots are free.

Pests: Flower thrips are the most common insect pest of vandas. Any insecticide rated for orchids will control them with regular use; rotate insecticides. Leaf-spot fungus *Phyllosticta* is problematic; a thiophanate-methyl systemic fungicide will control it. 🐛



Aeridovanda Christine Patton 'Naples Sunset' AM/AOS

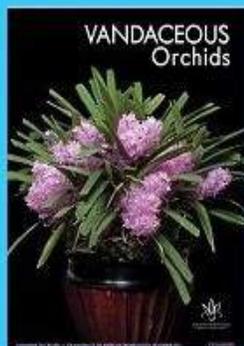
©Tom Kuligowski

About the Author

Robert Fuchs is a third-generation orchid grower, and president of R.F. Orchids, Inc., in Homestead, Florida. The nursery was founded in 1970. A recognized expert on vandaceous orchids, Robert presents lectures to audiences around the world, and his articles have been published in many prestigious publications. Bob is an accredited American Orchid Society Judge, past president of the South Florida Orchid Society, life member of the AOS, and was President of the 19th World Orchid Conference organizing committee in 2008. He was inducted into the Florida Agriculture Hall of Fame in 2013, the first orchid grower to be so honored. He is currently a Trustee of the American Orchid Society and Chair of the West Palm Beach Judging Center.

www.rforchids.com

Learn more about vanda hybridizing with Bob Fuchs at this AOS virtual seminar.



AOS Orchid Culture Day

Pour Your Coffee and Prepare Brunch!
Enjoy a Day with these Delightful Speakers

Explore the Virtual World of Vandaceous Orchids

SATURDAY, January 29, 2022

Start Time 10 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time)

\$30 USD

Building on the 2021 *Bodacious Vandaceous Orchids* Magazine Supplement, this is an opportunity to learn more about the VANDA family of orchids.

Tune in to presentations by four distinguished speakers.

- 1) **Kim Fedderson** from *Fair Orchids*: Yes, You Can Grow Vandaceous Orchids at Home
- 2) **Jason Fischer** from *Orchids Limited*: The Culture & History of *Vanda falcata* (formerly *Neofinetia*)
- 3) **Bob Fuchs** Pres. of *RF Orchids*: The Latest Trends in Vanda Hybridizing
- 4) **Brenda Oviatt** from *Botanica Ltd.*: Angraecoids - Conservation and Culture