

# The International Odontoglossum Alliance Newsletter

Volume 1

Summer 2018

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## ODONTOGLOSSUM VS ONCIDIUM

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Dear Fellow *Odontoglossum* lovers,

You, I, John Lindley and many others have asked the same question over the years: How do we distinguish *Odontoglossum* from *Oncidium*? The simple answer is that we need to use morphology in combination with any other available features and data. Molecular research has shown us that they belong to different branches/clades in the evolutionary tree, so they really are “different” and therefore it would be desirable to be able to tell them apart. But can we find ways to define this difference outside the laboratory? Traditional attempts of using a single feature (column-lip angle) in the flower morphology has failed, so we have to look closer and we have to widen our scope considerably.

Let's say you have an unidentified plant in front of you, alive or dried, and that you have used the keys to Oncidiinae provided in *Genera Orchidacearum* 5 (or worked it out in some other way), and you have reached the conclusion that it belongs in the *Oncidium sensu lato* complex (including *Odontoglossum* at this stage).

First question: Do you really know that it was wild-collected and not brought up in a nursery? Could it be a man-made hybrid? If definitely wild-collected, where did it come from? If it came from north of the Panama Canal, has two apical leaves, then you need a key for *Oncidium* from that region. If the pseudobulb has only one apical leaf and also has a glossy surface and purple spots or markings, then you have a member of the *Oncidioides* section in

*Odontoglossum*, and can use the key below to that genus, or you have a member of the *Chamaeleorchis* group in *Oncidium* (this is the *Onc. fuscatum* group, which I believe is sufficiently distinct to be treated as a separate genus). If the flower has a short and stubby column, thick at the base and without a distinct basal constriction, then you need to look into the *Chamaeleorchis* complex (currently in *Oncidium*; see a preliminary list of species below!) for further answers. Plants in the *Chamaeleorchis* complex can have one or two leaves per pseudobulb, which sometimes have purple markings.

If the column of the flower has a distinct basal constriction and distinct apical wings then you are dealing with a member of the *Oncidioides* section in *Odontoglossum*. Unfortunately, not all of the species from north of the Panama Canal that most likely belong in the *Oncidioides* section have been transferred from *Oncidium* yet due to a lack of molecular data. They have not been sequenced but display all the morphologic features typical for this group, and they are: *Onc. fulgens* (also known as *Onc. allenii* and *Onc. culex*), *Onc. parviflorum* and *Onc. punctulatum*, and possibly a few others that I am not aware of.

If the plant comes from South America, on the other hand, you need to find out if it comes from the Andean region or from elsewhere, like Brazil or Uruguay for example. If it comes from anywhere other than the Andean region you should use a key for plants in those areas (There are no *odontoglossums* there!). If it comes from the Andean region then you can look at the plant again. Has the plant one leaf and spots on the glossy pseudobulb (*Odm. trinasutum* seems to lack spots but fits in this section otherwise), and a column of the flower that is basally bent upward in a distinct sometimes to 90° angle from the axis of the pedicel and ovary and away from the lip, and is rather elongated and more or less constricted at the base? Use the key below to *Odontoglossum*, which includes the *Oncidioides* section! If the column is short and stubby without any basal constriction, then you are dealing with a member of the *Chamaeleorchis* group (no key exists yet for that group/genus).

If your plant has two leaves on the pseudobulb and comes from the Andean region it will help you if

you know more about where it came from, such as altitude, ecology and geography.

Can you find any abortive flowers anywhere on the inflorescence (at the tip, mid-section or base of the floral branches)? If so, then you most likely are dealing with a member of the *Heteranthocidium* complex (the “abortivum group” of *Oncidium sensu lato*, which I accept as a distinct genus and separate from *Oncidium sensu stricto*). Occasionally, members of the *Oncidioides* section in *Odontoglossum* also display abortive flowers but then you can rely on the glossy, unifoliate and generally purple mottled pseudobulbs.

If the plant came from the Andean region, has two leaves per pseudobulb, with no purple markings, no abortive flowers, a column that curves distinctly upwards from the axis of the pedicel and ovary, often in a ca. 90° angle and away from the lip base (there is your column-lip angle again!) and with no physical contact with the lip, and has a minute, rounded viscidium, then you should use a key to *Oncidium* (provided you have already sorted out *Chamaeleorchis* and *Heteranthocidium*).

If the basal part of the column is in the same axis as the pedicel and ovary, or only weakly angled away from it and generally curved towards the lip apically, or is parallel with the lip base and/or has physical contact with the lip, then you need to use a key to *Odontoglossum*.

Looking at the pollinarium and how it is presented to the pollinator is also very helpful. See Figure A-C for examples! An ovoid and relatively large viscidium in comparison with the stipe and pollinaria is typical for species in *Odontoglossum sensu lato*, except for the *Oncidioides* section. A rounded and tiny viscidium is typical for all Andean species of *Oncidium sensu stricto*, including members of *Chamaeleorchis* and *Heteranthocidium*.

People who grow or work with these orchids on a more regular basis don't seem to have any problems with distinguishing an *Odontoglossum* from an *Oncidium* by just looking at them, with the exception of the recently transferred species in the *Oncidioides* complex. But since the *Oncidioides* plants look like *Odontoglossum* plants when out of flowers, it should not be hard to convince people what to call

them. Granted, plants without flowers could also be members of *Chamaeleorchis*, but when they flower you can identify them accurately. We know that *Odontoglossum sensu lato* and *Oncidium sensu stricto* are separate thanks to molecular evidence, and with just a little training and experience we can tell them apart by looking at them. They do actually share features that separate the clades from each other but you need to know where to look and how to combine them. Using illustrations and photos rather than words goes a long way to describe something!

**Preliminary list of species in the *Chamaeleorchis* complex:**

*Onc. abruptum, andradeanum, anthocrene, bicameratum, fuscatum, hyphaematicum, panduratum, planilabre, toachicum* and *tsubotae*

This is a very interesting group of species that needs further studies (and a key)!

**Key to the sections of ODONTOGLOSSUM**

Pseudobulbs generally with one apical leaf, and generally but not always mottled or spotted with brown or purple. Flowers always yellow, more or less covered by brown spots and blotches; column erect in a *ca.* 90° angle from the ovary and also away from the lip...section **Oncidioides**.

Chrysomorphum Group

*Odontoglossum chrysomorphum* (Lindl.) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

*Odontoglossum tipuloides* (Rchb.f.) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

*Odontoglossum trinasutum* (Kraenzl.) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

Pictum Group

*Odontoglossum boothianum* (Rchb.f.) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

*Odontoglossum obryzatoides* (Kraenzl.) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

*Odontoglossum pictum* (Kunth) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

*Odontoglossum zelenkoanum* (Dressler & Pupulin) Dalström & W.E.Higgins

Pseudobulbs generally but not always with two apical leaves, sometimes mottled or spotted with brown or purple. Flowers in various colors, including yellow, brown, pink, red, purple and white, with or without contrasting markings; the lower part of the column straight and generally in the same hori-

zontal plane as the ovary, or in a slightly deviating angle, and then commonly but not always more or less curved towards, or in some cases away from the lip near the apex...**1.**

**1a.** Flowers with a stigma divided by the rostellum into two separate lobes...**2.**

**1b.** Flowers with an undivided stigma...**3.**

**2a.** Flowers generally resupinate and brightly colored in rose pink, orange to red (very rarely yellow), without any contrasting markings on the sepals and petals, and a column with a distinct hood... section **Coloratum**.

*Odontoglossum mixturum* (Dalström & Sönnermark) Dalström

*Odontoglossum noezlianum* Mast.

*Odontoglossum roseum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum vulcanicum* (Rchb.f.) Dalström

**2b.** Flowers generally non-resupinate, or if resupinate then less than 1 cm across, pale olive brown to dark brown, or yellow with brown spots, and a column without hood but with large lateral wings, generally but not always with distinct brown spots near the base... section **Parviflorum**.

*Odontoglossum flavobrunneum* (Senghas) Dalström

*Odontoglossum galianoii* (Dalström & P. Nuñez) Dalström

*Odontoglossum koechlinianum* (Collantes & G.Gerlach) Dalström. The divided stigma supports a placement in this section. Other features such as the yellow colored lateral column lobes, however, suggest a placement in section Lobulatum. No molecular data exist yet to clarify this case. Hence this species is shown in both section plates for comparison.

*Odontoglossum tigroides* C.Schweinf.

**3a.** Flowers with a lip rigidly attached to the ventral side of the column by a longitudinal and fleshy ridge of various lengths, generally but not always without erect lateral lobes, and a column with a pair of distinct, forward projecting, fleshy and parallel lobes below the stigma... section **Lobulatum**.

Astranthum series

*Odontoglossum ariasii* Dalström

*Odontoglossum astranthum* Linden & Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum aurarium* (Rchb.f.) Dalström

*Odontoglossum crassidactylum* Dalström & Ruíz-Pérez

*Odontoglossum dracoceps* Dalström

*Odontoglossum micklowii* Dalström

*Odontoglossum multistellare* Rchb.f.

Povedanum “series”

*Odontoglossum povedanum* P.Ortiz

Tenuifolium “series”

*Odontoglossum tenuifolium* Dalström

**3b.** Flowers with a column without a pair of distinct, forward projecting, fleshy and parallel lobes below the stigma...**4.**

**4a.** Flowers with a lip rigidly attached to the base of the column in various ways, commonly through a short, almost triangular structure, sometimes along the ventral flanks as well, or through a longitudinal ventral ridge, and with variously shaped distinct and erect, or indistinct and slightly spreading lateral lobes, or without erect lateral lobes but then with unmarked pink to reddish sepals and petals...section **Canaliculatum**.

Constrictum series

*Odontoglossum alberti* P.Ortiz

*Odontoglossum alvarezii* P.Ortiz

*Odontoglossum aspidorhinum* F.Lehm.

*Odontoglossum blandum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum cirrhosum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum constrictum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum crinitum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum crocidipterum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum gloriosum* Linden & Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum lucianianum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum naevium* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum odoratum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum portillae* Bockem.

*Odontoglossum praestans* Rchb.f. & Warsc.

*Odontoglossum sanderianum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum schillerianum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum tenue* Cogn.

*Odontoglossum wallisii* Linden & Rchb.f.

Harryanum series

*Odontoglossum deburghgraeveanum* Dalström & G.Merino

*Odontoglossum harryanum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum helgae* Königer

*Odontoglossum velleum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum wyattianum* A.G.Wilson ex. Dalström

Lindleyanum series

*Odontoglossum lindleyanum* Rchb.f. & Warsc.

*Odontoglossum mirandum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum platynaris* Dalström

Nevadense “series”

*Odontoglossum nevadense* Rchb.f.

Sanguineum “series”

*Odontoglossum sanguineum* (Rchb.f.) Dalström

**4b.** Flowers with the lip attached to the base and for short distances along the ventral and lateral flanks of the column, creating a tube-like structure, then free with a short and flat strap-like tissue functioning as a hinge that makes the front lamina flexible without breaking the attachment when pressed downwards... section **Articulatum**

Crispum series

*Odontoglossum crispum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum hunnewellianum* Rolfe

*Odontoglossum nobile* Rchb.f.

Cristatum series

*Odontoglossum cristatum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum furcatum* Dalström

*Odontoglossum hallii* Lindl. 1837

*Odontoglossum hirtzii* Dalström

*Odontoglossum lehmannii* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum luteopurpureum* Lindl.

*Odontoglossum tripudians* Rchb.f.

Cruentum series

*Odontoglossum armatum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum auroincarum* Dalström & Ruíz-Pérez

*Odontoglossum cruentum* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum juninense* Schltr.

*Odontoglossum subuligerum* Rchb.f.

Epidendroides series

*Odontoglossum epidendroides* Kunth

*Odontoglossum filamentosum* Dalström & Ruíz-Pérez

*Odontoglossum kegeljanii* Morren

*Odontoglossum praenitens* Rchb.f.

*Odontoglossum spectatissimum* Lindl.

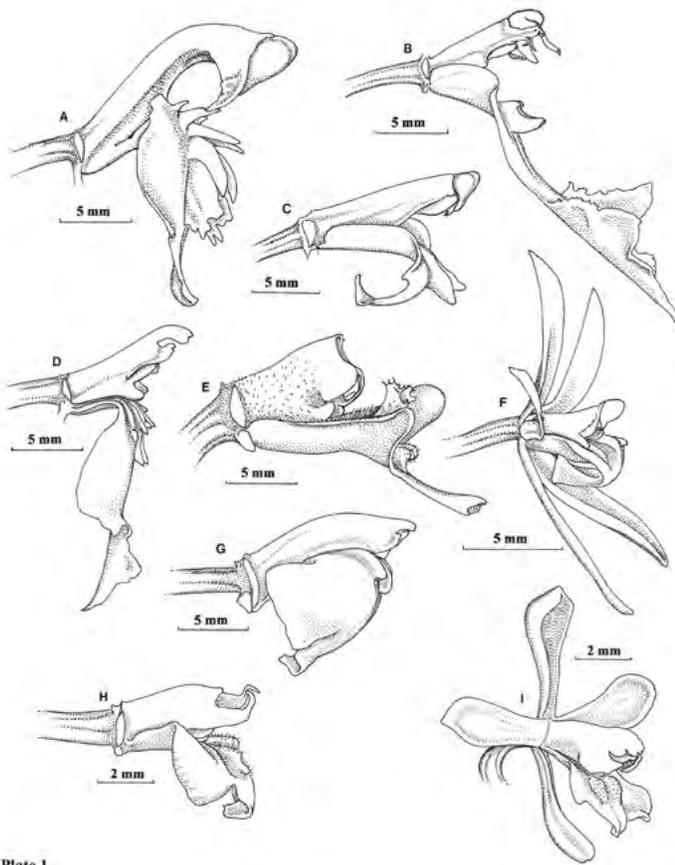


Plate 1

**Plate 1.** Lateral views of lip-column structures

A. *Odontoglossum cristatum*. B. *Odontoglossum blandum*. C. *Odontoglossum mirandum*. D. *Odontoglossum astranthum*. E. *Odontoglossum povedanum*. F. *Odontoglossum tenuifolium*, flower lateral view. G. *Odontoglossum noezlianum*. H. *Odontoglossum tigroides*. I. *Odontoglossum koechlinianum*, flower lateral view. All illustrations by Dalström.

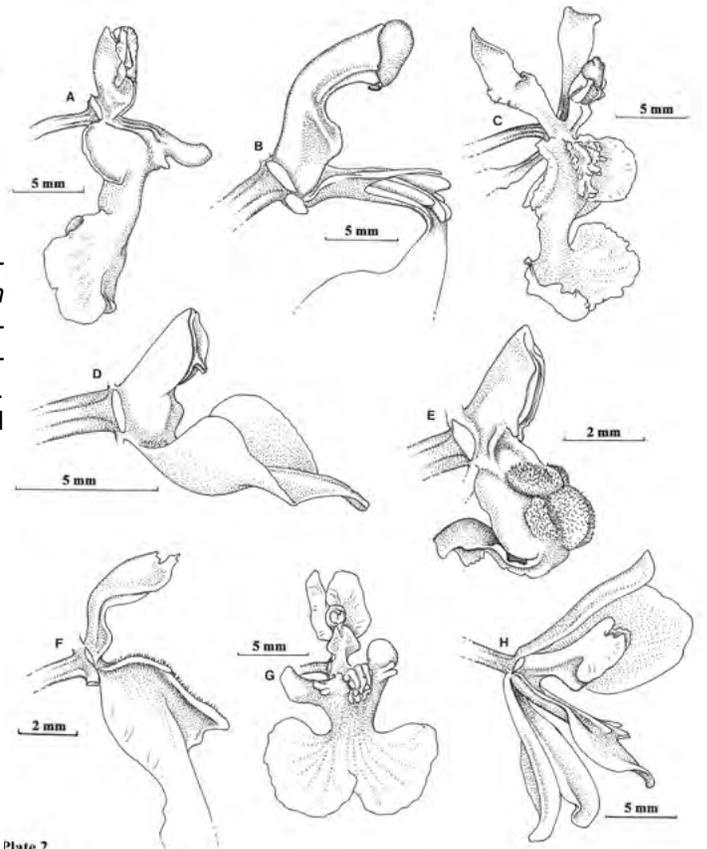
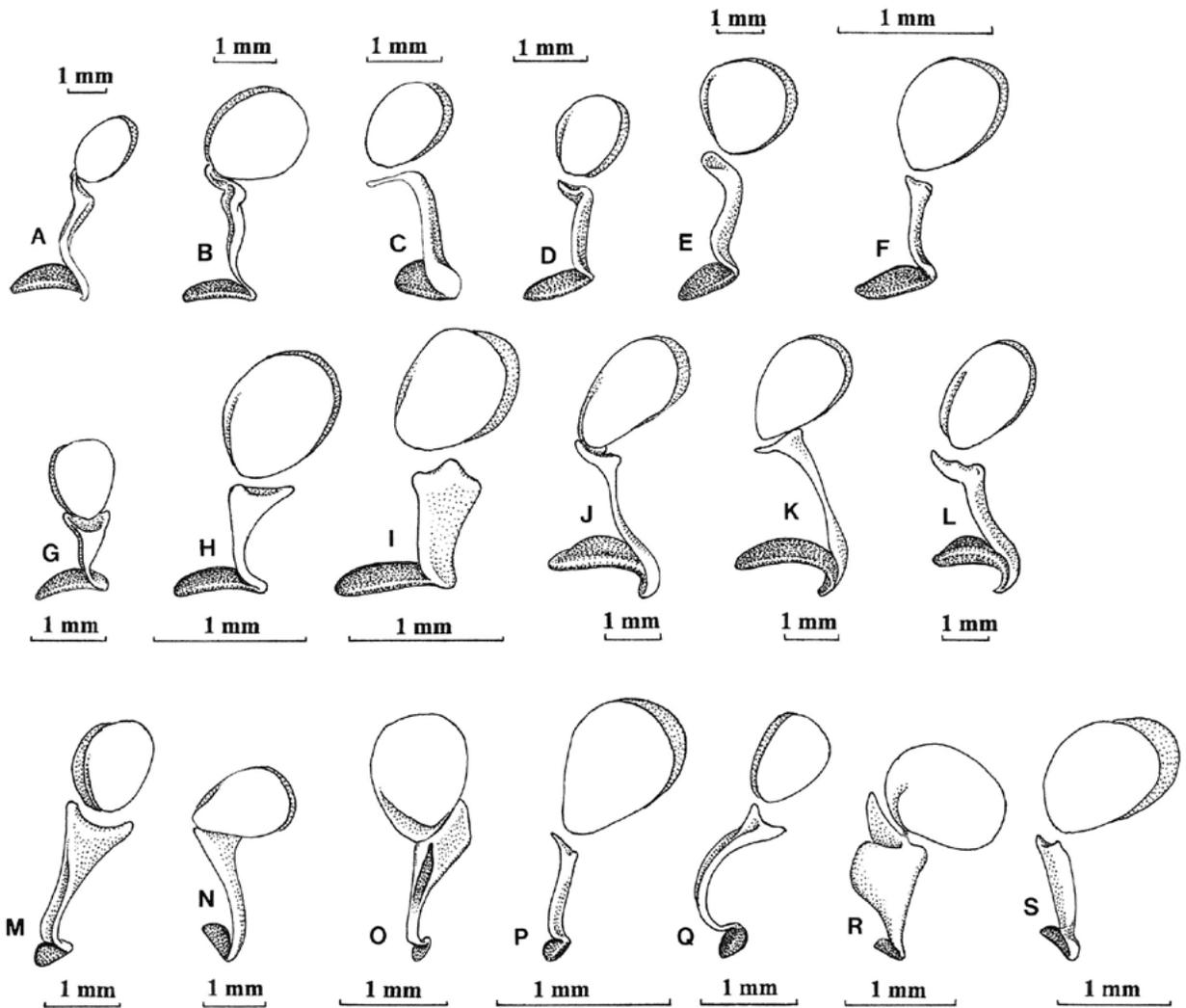


Plate 2

**Plate 2.** Lateral views of lip-column structures.

A. *Oncidium mantense*. B. *Oncidium hastilabium*. C. *Oncidium cf. citrinum*. D. *Oncidium (Chamaeleorchis) andradeanum*. E. *Oncidium (Chamaeleorchis) toachicum*. F. *Odontoglossum trinasutum* (syn: *Oncidium hapalotyle*). G. *Oncidium (Heteranthocidium) bryolophotum*. H. *Oncidium (Heteranthocidium) acinaceum*. All illustrations by Dalström.

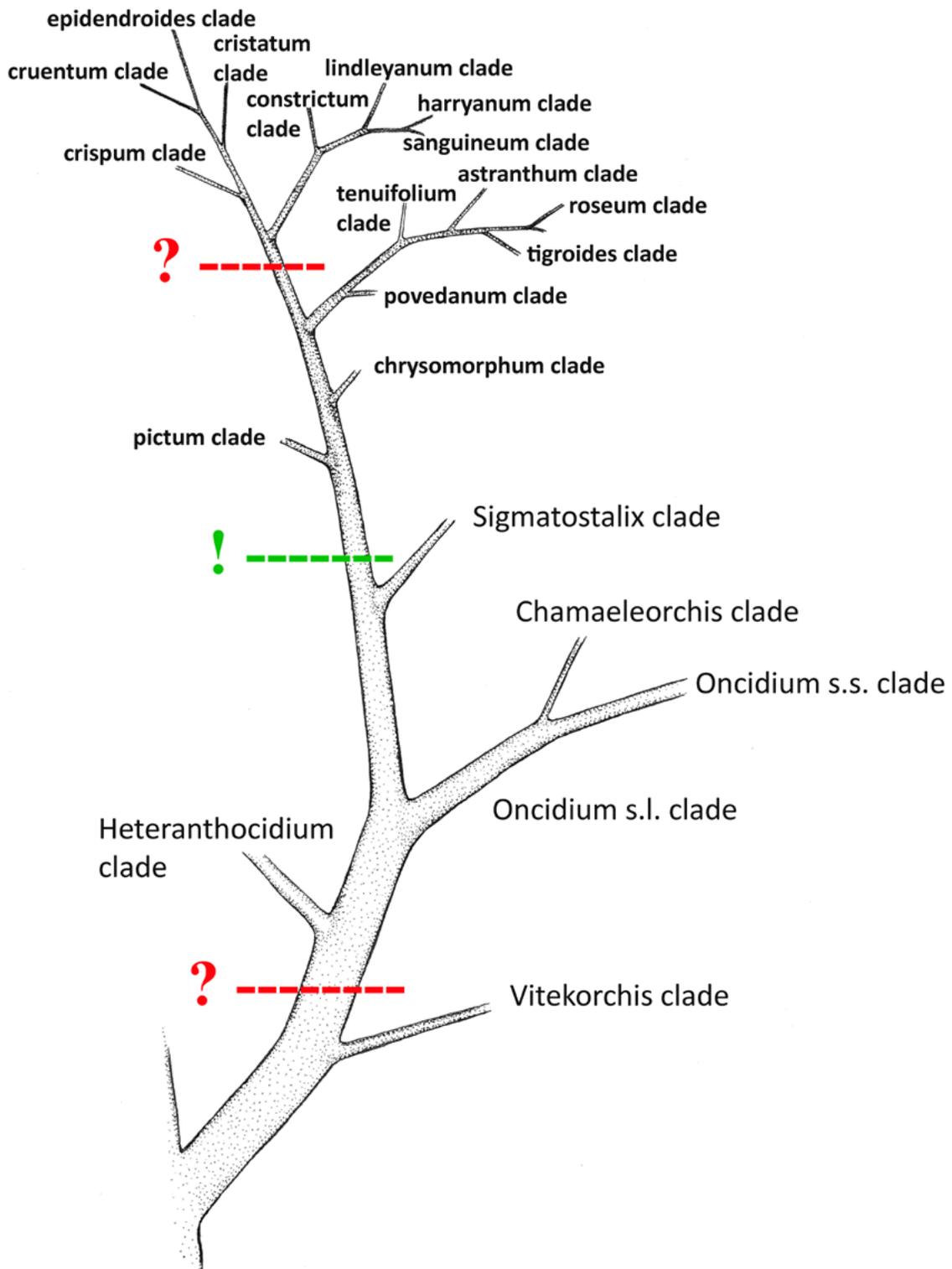


### Plate 3

**Plate 3.** Pollinaria, lateral views.

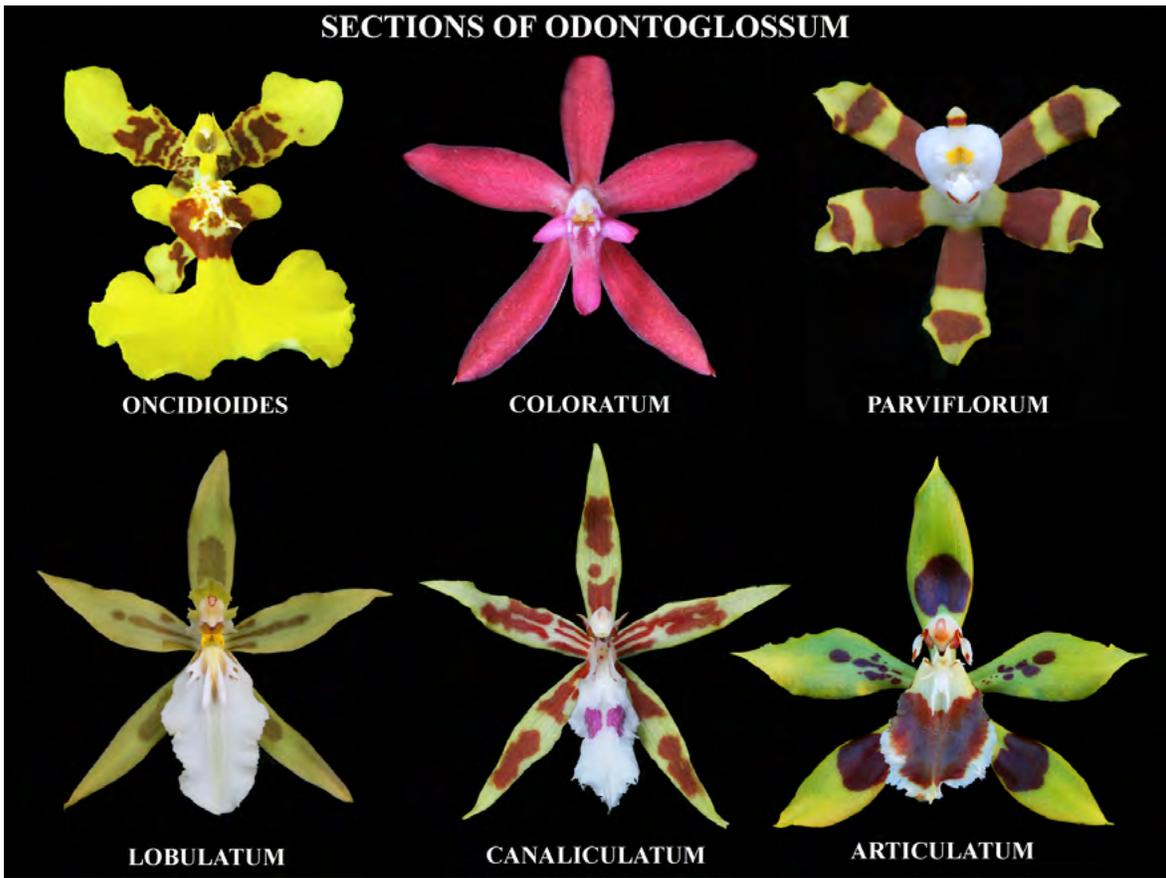
A. *Odontoglossum cristatum*. B. *Odontoglossum blandum*. C. *Odontoglossum mirandum*. D. *Odontoglossum as-tranthum*. E. *Odontoglossum povedanum*. F. *Odontoglossum tenuifolium*. G. *Odontoglossum noezlianum*. H. *Odon-toglossum tigroides*. I. *Odontoglossum koechlinianum*. J. *Odontoglossum crispum*. K. *Odontoglossum epidendroi-des*. L. *Odontoglossum juninense*. M. *Oncidium mantense*. N. *Oncidium hastilabium*. O. *Oncidium (Chamaeleorchis) andradeanum*. P. *Oncidium (Chamaeleorchis) toachicum*. Q. *Odontoglossum trinasutum*. R. *Oncidium (Heteran-thocidium) bryolophotum*. S. *Oncidium (Heteranthocidium) acinaceum*. All illustrations by Dalström.



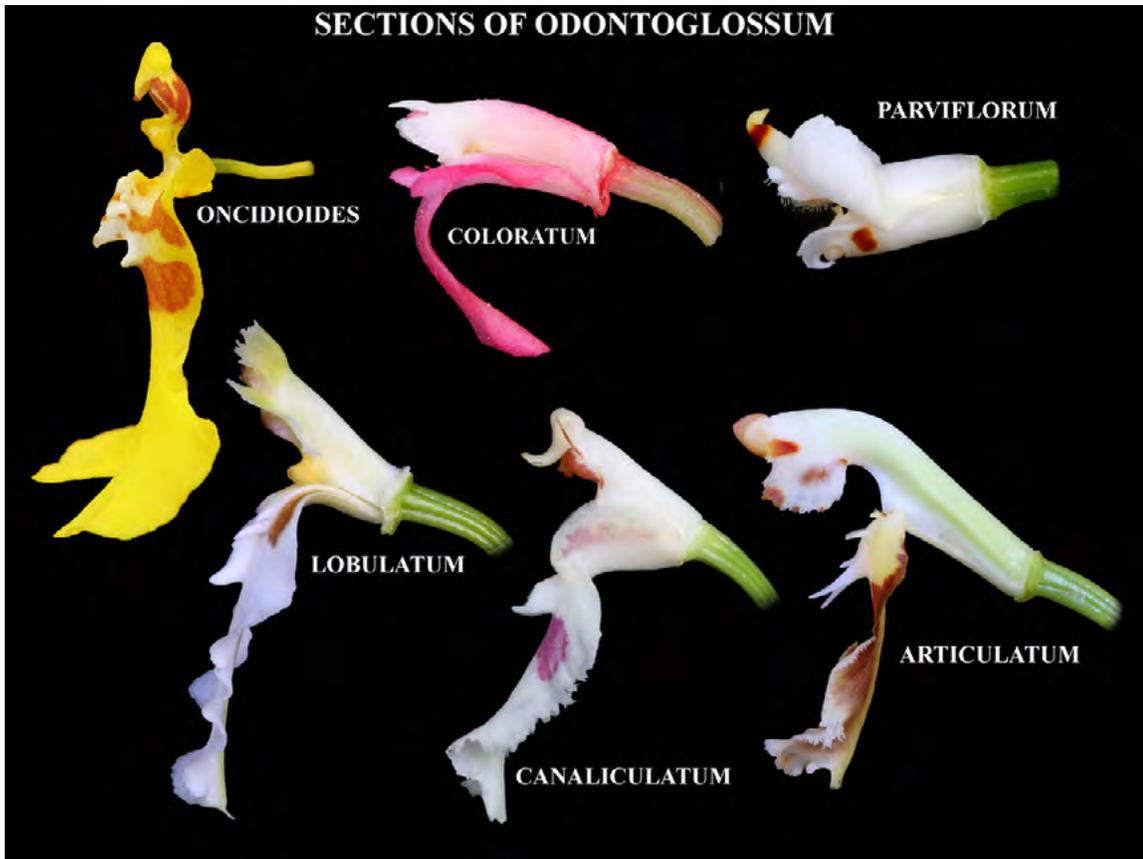


**Plate 5**

**Plate 5.** Artistic rendition of the DNA tree with three alternatives for generic divisions. The green “cut” is favored here. Illustration by Dalström, based on Neubig et al. (2012).



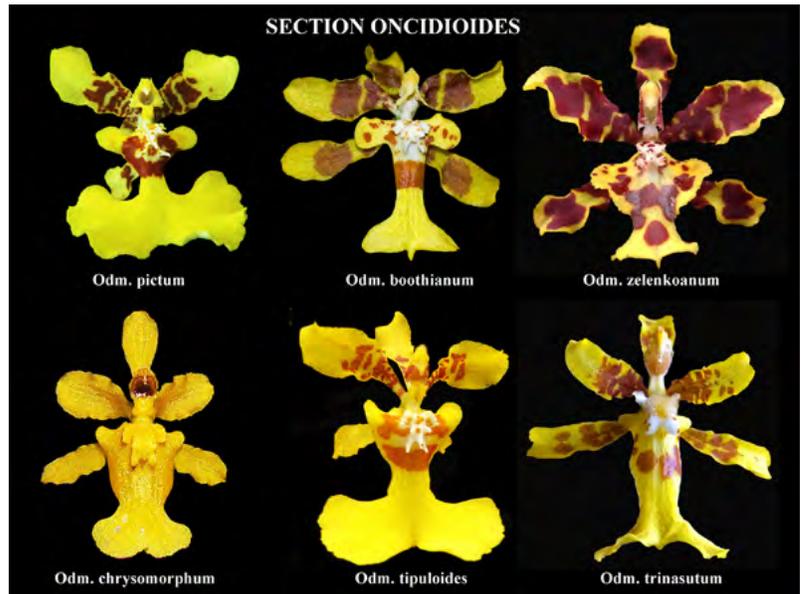
**Fig. 1:** Sections of *Odontoglossum*



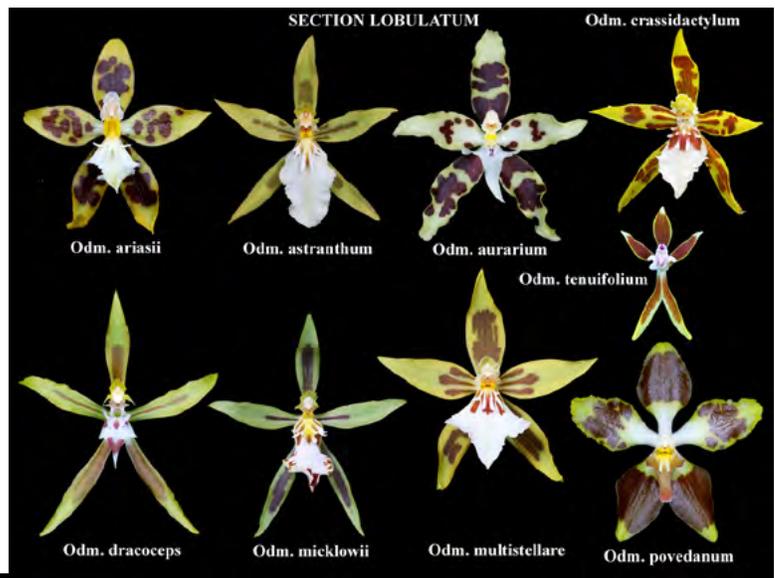
**Fig. 2:** Sections of *Odontoglossum*-profiles.



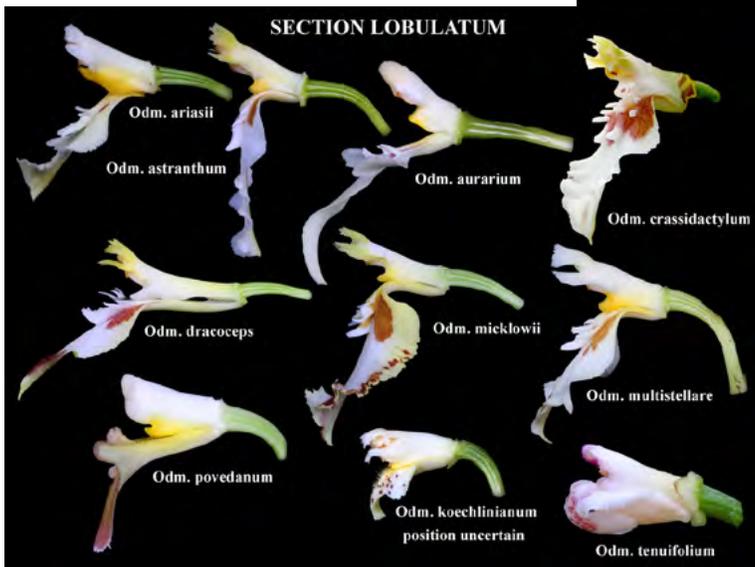
**Fig. 3:** *Odontoglossum boothianum*-plant habit, showing the unifoliate and purple mottled pseudobulb, which is typical for plants in the *Oncidioides* section of *Odontoglossum*.



**Fig. 4:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Oncidioides*. Photographs of *Odm. boothianum* and *Odm. trinasutum* by Ecuagenera



**Fig. 5:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Lobulatum*. Photograph of *Odm. crassidactylum* by Saúl Ruíz.



**Fig. 6:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Lobulatum*-profiles. Photograph of *Odm. crassidactylum* by Saúl Ruíz.

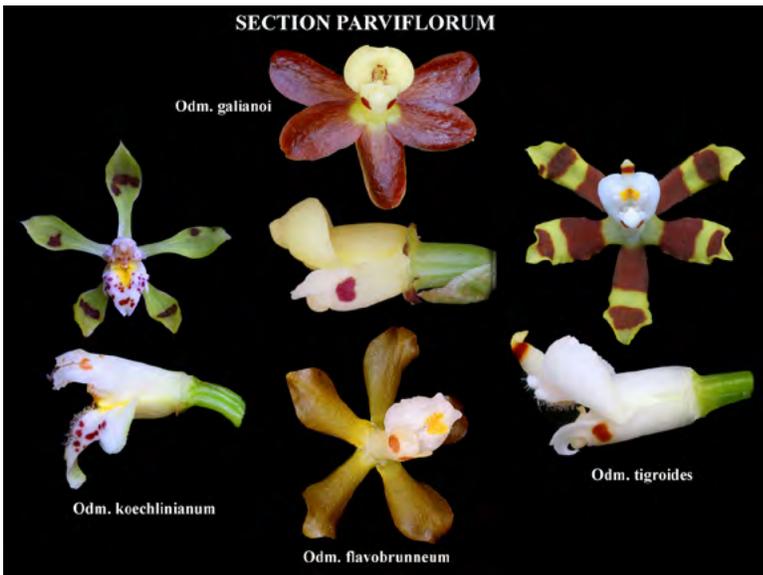


Fig. 7: *Odontoglossum*-section *Parviflorum*



Fig. 8: *Odontoglossum*-section *Coloratum*.

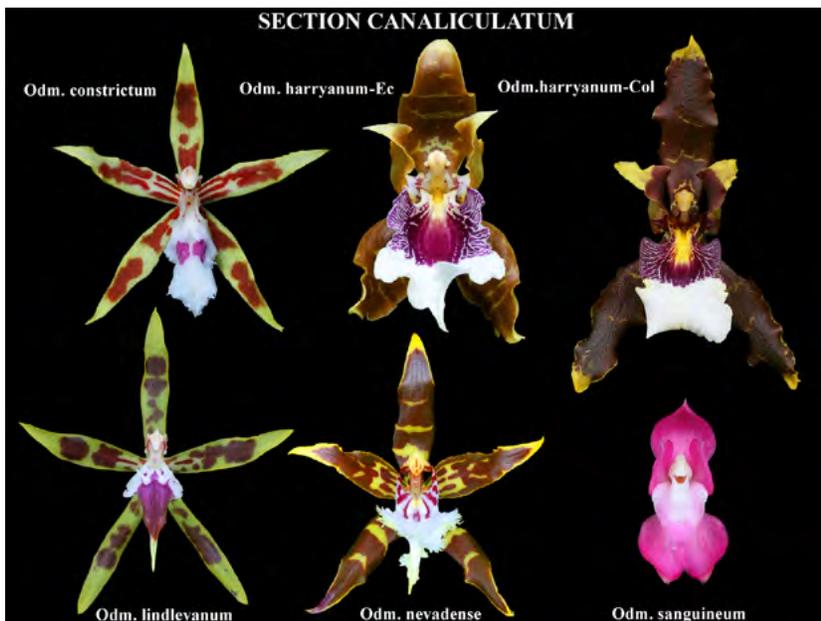
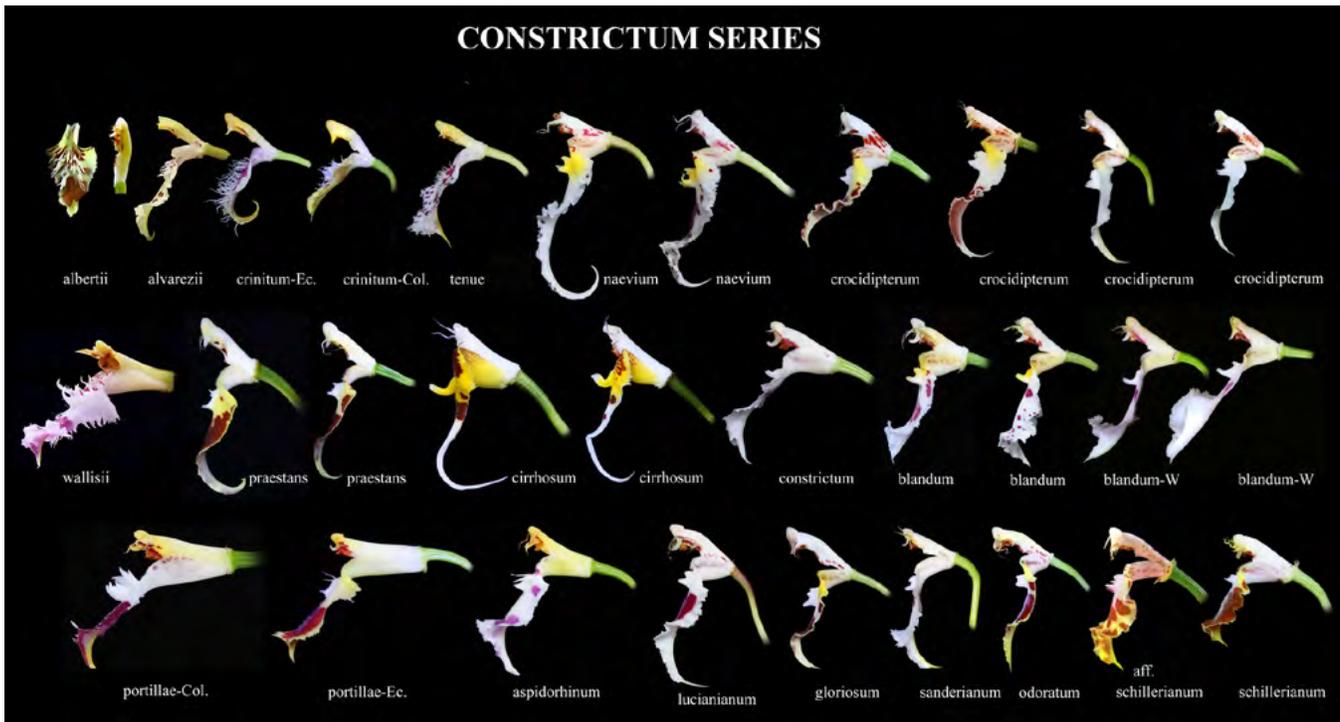
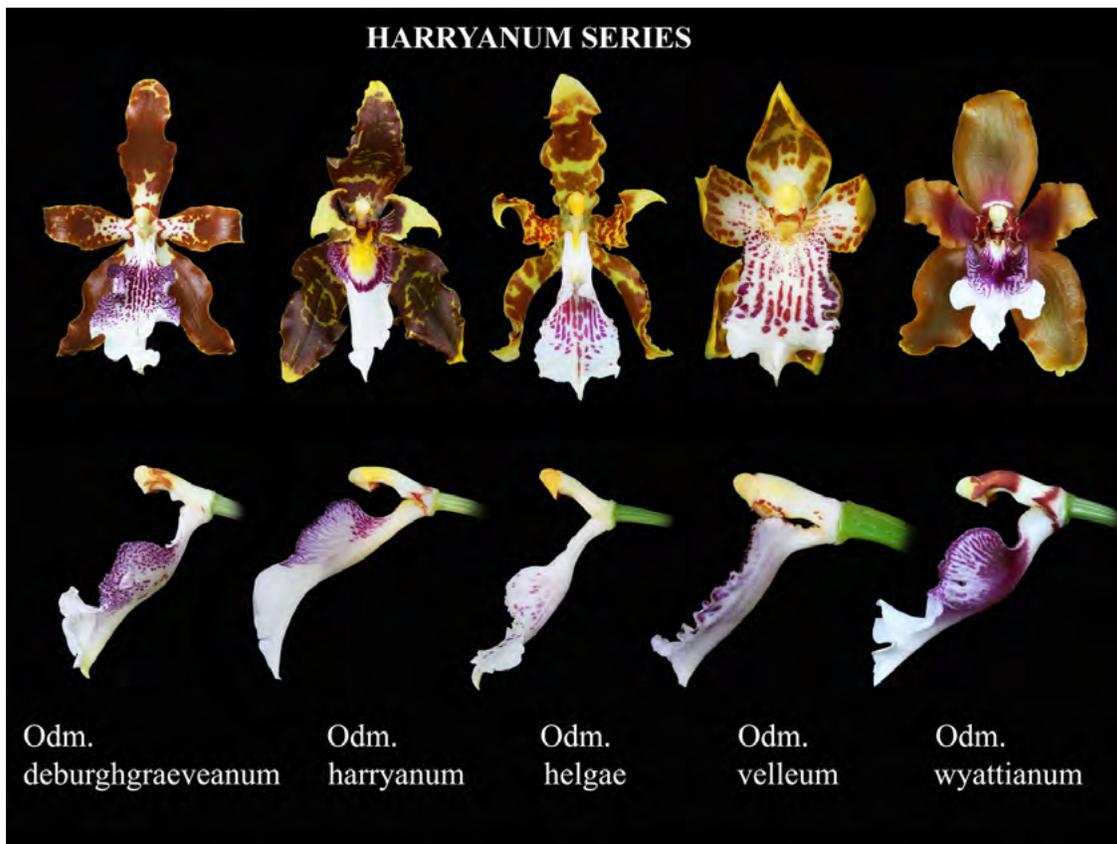


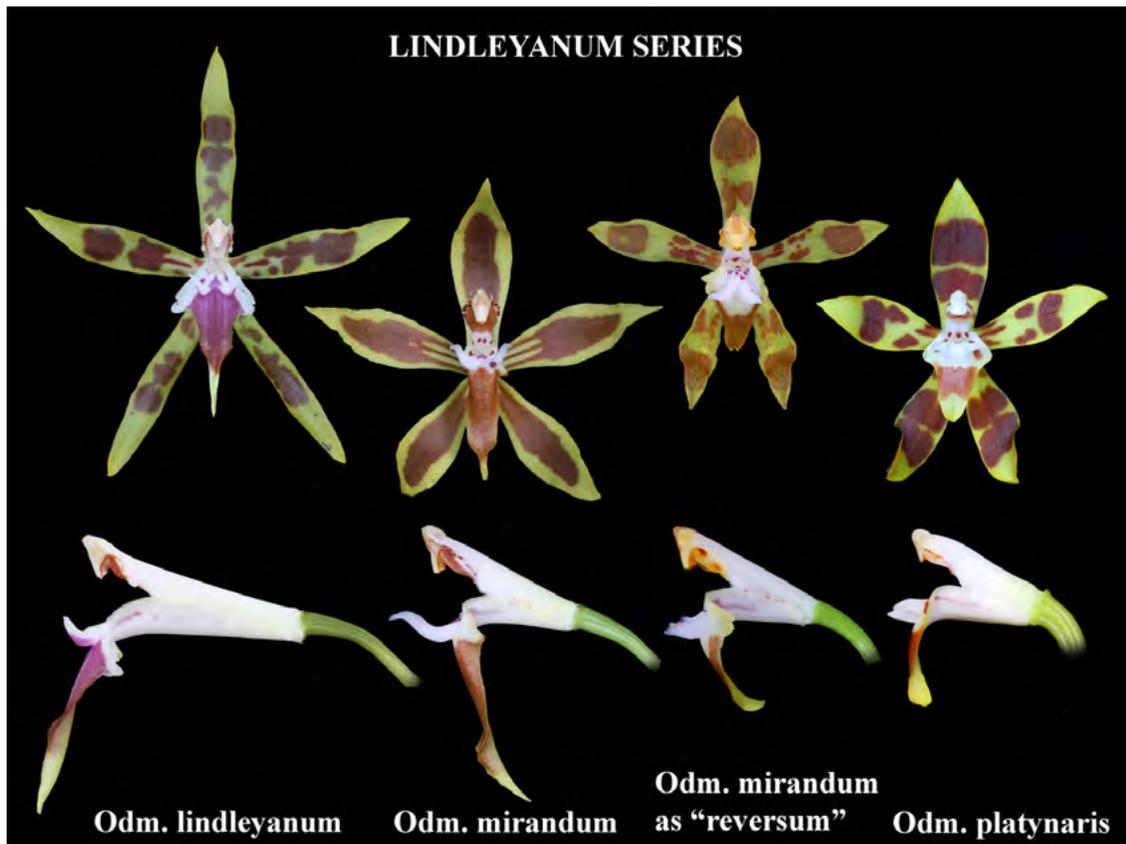
Fig. 9: *Odontoglossum*-Section *Canaliculatum*.



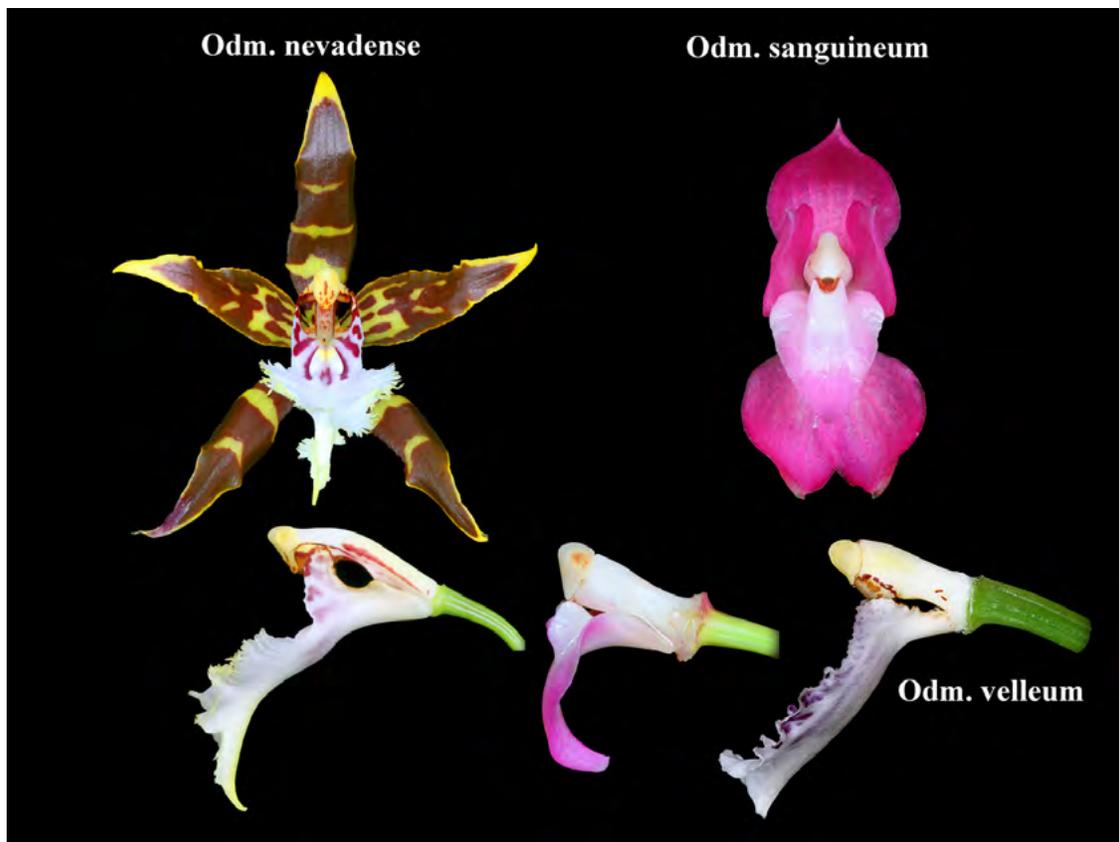
**Fig 10:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Canaliculatum*-*constrictum* series.



**Fig. 11:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Canaliculatum*-*harryanum* series.



**Fig. 12:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Canaliculatum-lindleyanum* series.



**Fig. 13:** *Odontoglossum*-section *Canaliculatum-nevadense* and *sanguineum* series-with profile of *Odm. velleum* for comparison.

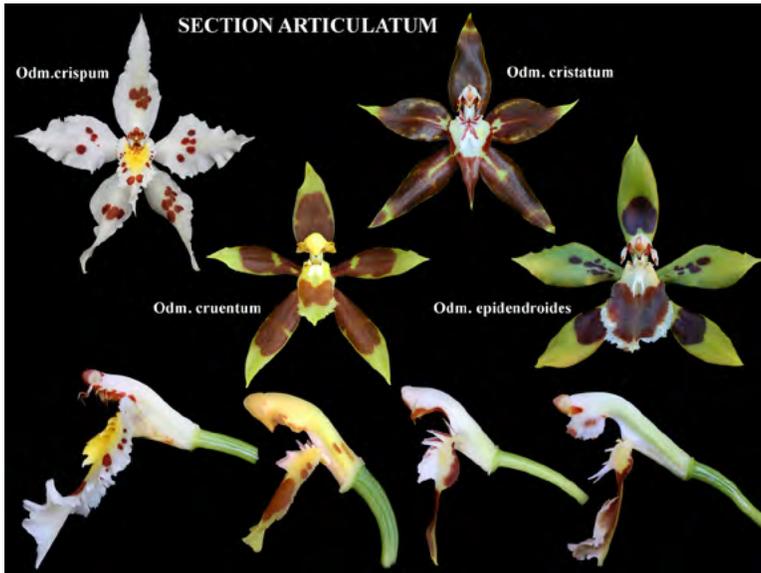


Fig. 14: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum*.



Fig. 15: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-crispum* series.

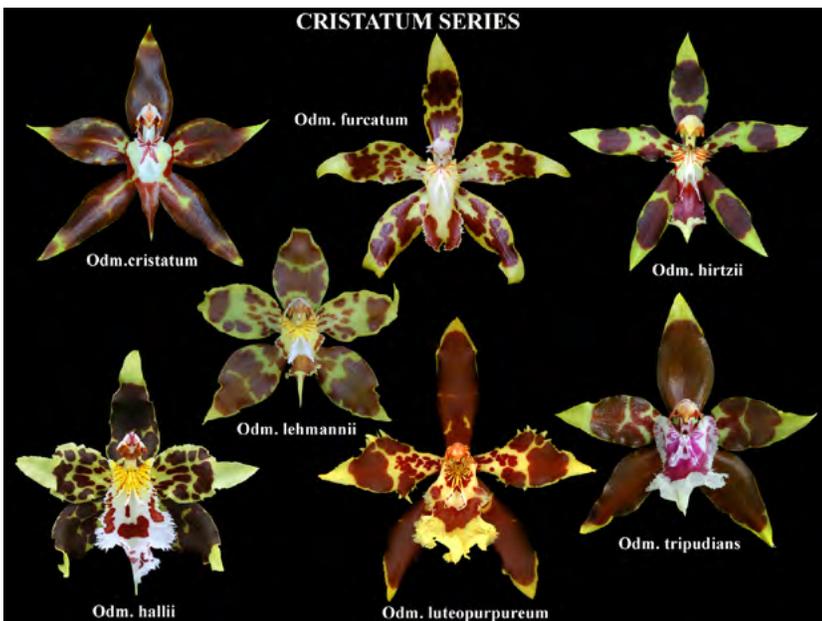


Fig. 16: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-cristatum* series.

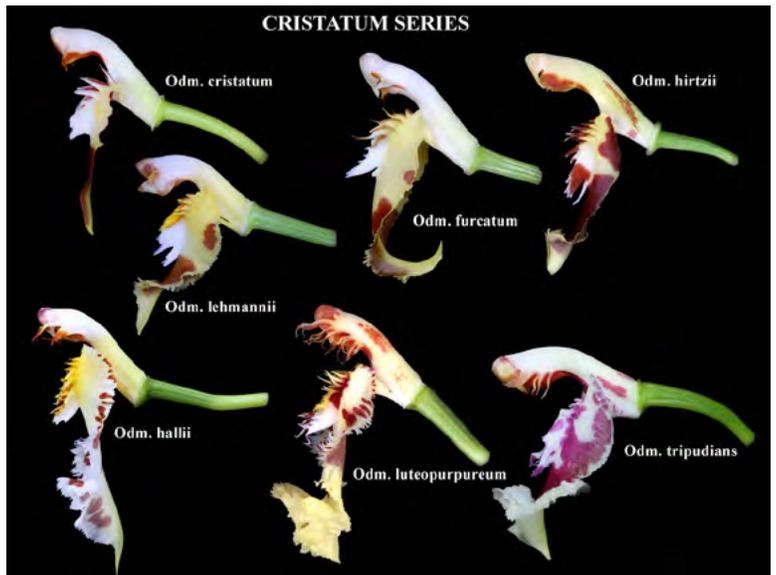


Fig. 17: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-cristatum* series-profiles.

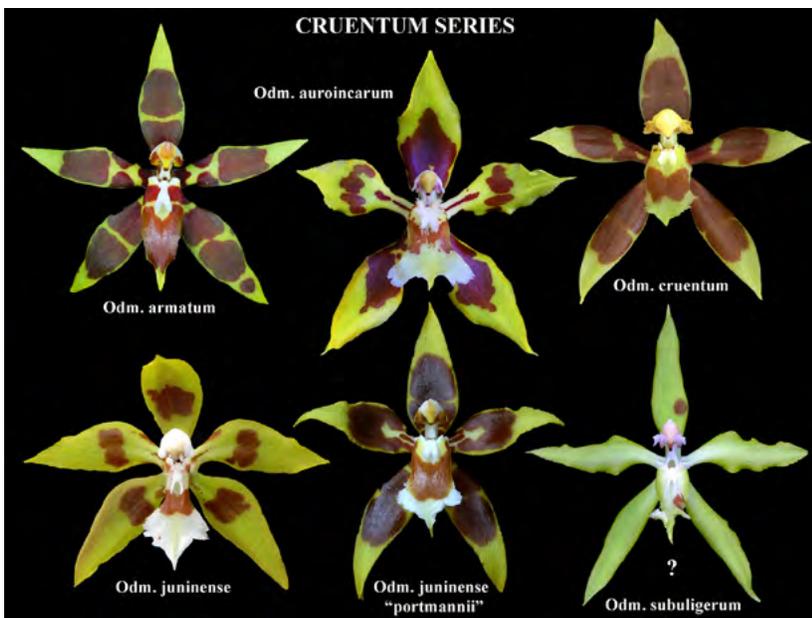


Fig. 18: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-cruentum* series.

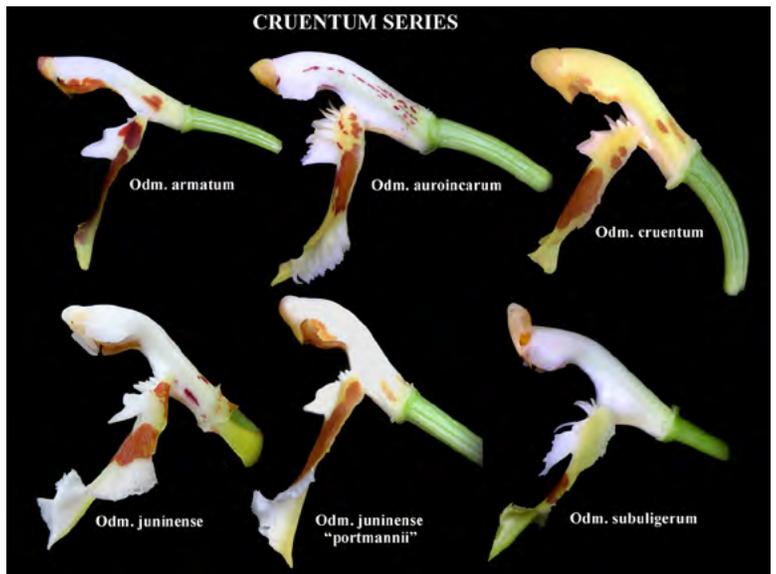


Fig. 19: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-cruentum* series-profiles.

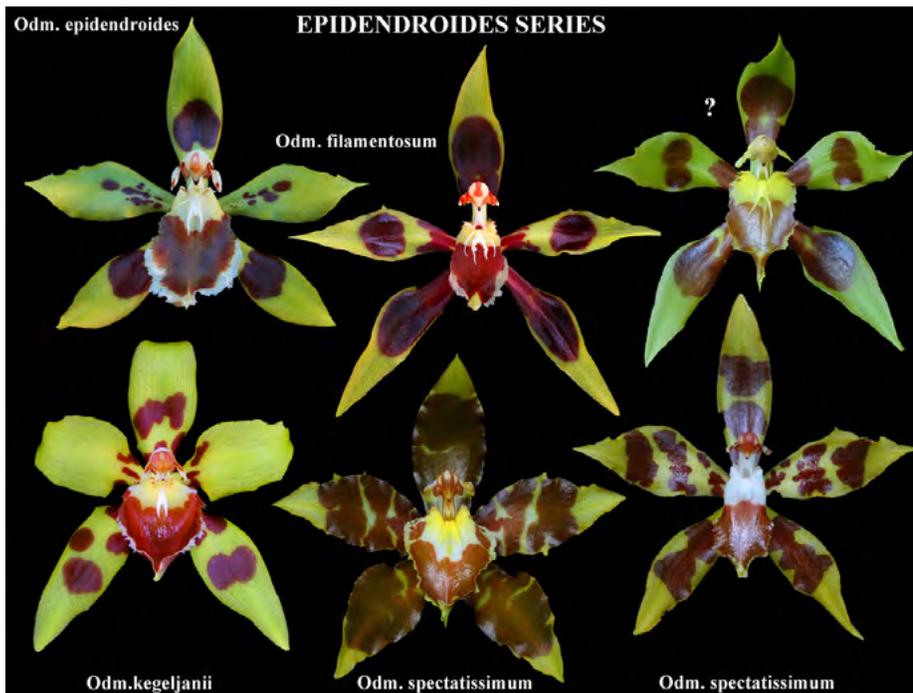


Fig. 20: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-epidendroides* series.

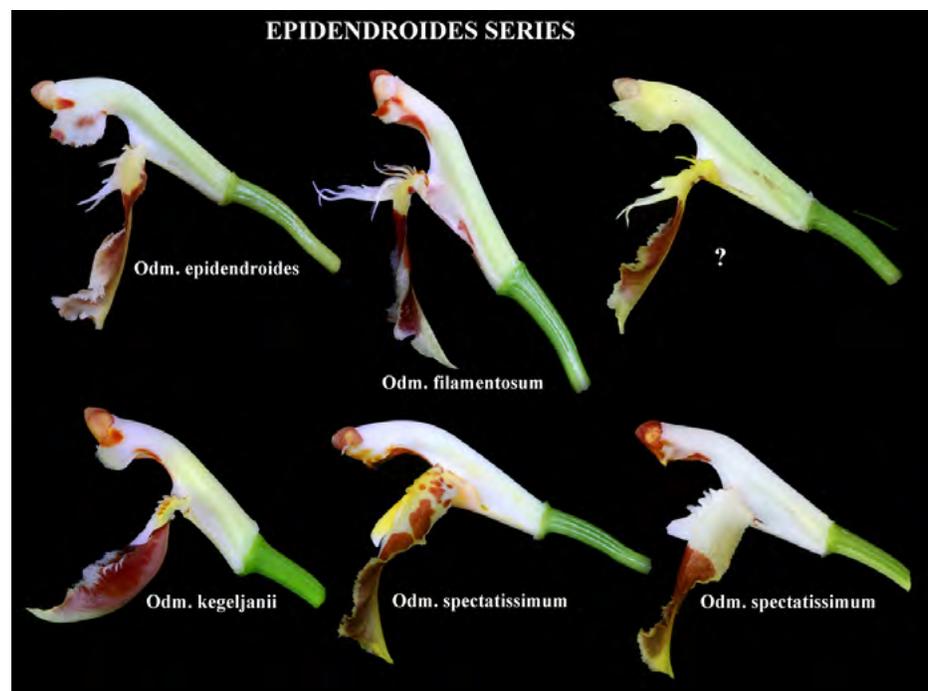


Fig. 21: *Odontoglossum*-section *Articulatum-epidendroides* series-profiles.

All photographs by Guido Deburghgraeve and Stig Dalström unless mentioned otherwise

(*Vuyls*. Mem. Mary Kavanaugh 4n X  
*Oda Charlesworthii* 4n)

by Andy Easton

These two first bloom seedlings were bloomed in Rio Negro in October 2017. Cutting edge new *Vuylstekearas*. After the *Vuyls*. Mem. Mary Kavanaugh crossing proved W.W.G. Moir wrong, yet again, it has been used in some useful hybrids. None more



*Vuyls*. Mem. Mary Kavanaugh 'Viking'

interesting than the crossing pictured. Here you see an Odont Alliance line that can be used for cut flowers, pot plants and also has significant warmth-tolerance. Looking at the rough genetic breakdown, we see 28% *Odm. harryanum*, 25% *Miltonia spectabilis* var *moreliana*, 25% *Cda. noezliana* and 15% *Odm. crispum*. The flowers are of heavy substance and last a very long time. Already one is in the cloning process and likely several more selections will follow. Quite a back-story too, from the single plant in the sale's area at Rod McLellan Orchids of a tetraploid *Miltonia spectabilis* var *moreliana* 'Royalty' that was taken to Golden Gate Orchids whereupon Tom Perlite crossed it with his *Oda Elpheon*. Then



*Oda Charlesworthii* 4N

two limited germination flasks from Plants in Vitro, one deflasked at Golden Gate and the other grown out at Geyserland Orchids in New Zealand. Then back in Salinas, the cross onto a plant of *Vuyls* Mem. Mary Kavanaugh 'Viking' AM/AOS with pollen from Bob Hamilton's *Oda Charlesworthii* 4n. Somehow I doubt we've heard the last of this line!



(*Vuyls*. Mem. Mary Kavanaugh x  
*Oda Charlesworthii* 4N)

## Hybridizing Notes

by Andy Easton



***Oncidioda Charlesworthii***

I am not sure why anyone would remake this hybrid of *Cda. noezliana* X *Onc. incurvum* as it seems to have been around for eons and for me, the untidy spike habit one sees in its offspring surely detracts. No argument on the color intensity however. But our friend Dr Howard Liebman marches to his own drum and he certainly shares his hybridizing efforts most generously. Maybe if this was put with something like *Oda Heatonensis* and the seed treated with oryzalin, there might be an interesting result?



***Wils. Pui Chin 'Flying Tiger'* AM/AOS**

This Bob Hamilton hybrid from 1987 has been around long enough to have whiskers! Bob himself got the first award on this specific clone in 1989, an HCC/AOS. How any AOS judge can consider this orchid to be worth a near FCC (88 points) in 2017, 28 years later, is beyond me. In my opinion there are two things holding Odonts back at present, their scarcity and the total ignorance of most AOS judges when evaluating examples of the Odontoglossum Alliance. This is a very handsome hybrid, vigorous and always showy. It was likely underscored in 1989 and clearly overscored in 2017. *Odcdm* Tiger Hambühren hybrids were so common for a time and now they seem to have become scarce again. Possibly a major failure on the part of *Odont* hybridizers at the end of last Century was their neglect of strong growing yellow lines. It would have been very interesting if Tiger Hambühren had been bred to the best yellow *Odontoglossums* of the day because even in 2018, intense yellows are still both rare and extremely desirable.



***Odm Dugger's Gold 'Hawk Hill'***

One of the last hybrids made by the venerable Robert Dugger and registered after his death by Sunset Orchids, happily now also beyond the sunset! This is a yellow *Odontoglossum* of the highest quality. As was quite normal for the period, both parents were English bred. *Odm* Stonehurst Yellow repre-

sented one of Bert White's last landmark hybrids. It had the reputation of being a bit difficult to get seed from but hybridizers are persistent animals and many of the famous names used it in their breeding programs. *Odm* Moselle, the pollen parent, was one of the last worthwhile *Odonts* to appear under the Charlesworth banner. But with only three registered hybrids to its credit, clearly Dugger's Gold has been severely neglected. The intense yellow *Odm* Roy Hipkins is its stellar offspring and one must hope that both the parent and its progeny will enjoy a hybridizing revival in the near future. OK, we know that some serious *Odontoglossum* Alliance hybridizers refuse to register under the current idiotic Kew-dominated nomenclatural scenario but a high quality orchid like Dugger's Gold should have numerous grandchildren almost two decades into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century!



***Oda Jaffa 4n***

This is a hybrid (*Odm. velleum* X *Oda* Chanticleer) that quite honestly we have "bet the ranch on"! *Odm velleum* is essentially a miniature *Odm harryanum* and seems to breed in a similar fashion. The cross was treated with oryzalin and this is one of the tetraploid results. OK, no progeny have yet bloomed but the intensity and luminous glow of this orange

*Oda* is stunning. The cross we are waiting to make will be with *Vuylys* Cambria 'Plush' 4n and I just hope I live long enough to see the results in bloom. Again, plant habit is extremely compact and flowering profuse so should mini *Odonts* gain in popularity, here would be a parent of exciting potential.



**(*Oda* (Shelley X Prince Vultan))**

*Oda* Shelley (*Odm. pescatorei* X *Oda* Heatonensis) was a stroke of genius, as expected, from Keith Andrew. *Oda* Prince Vultan (*Cda. sanguinea* X *Odm. pescatorei*) was a no-brainer..... well actually, it was a smart and very valuable parallel advancement in the *Oda* Heatonensis/ *Odm. pescatorei* line especially as the cross was treated with oryzalin to give both diploid and tetraploid forms for further hybridizing. On first reaction one looks at a flower like this and thinks, how can we punch up the size? I'm fairly sure a dose of something like *Oda* Joe's Drum would solve that problem very smartly. But maybe, in this era of smaller growing areas and growing case culture, we should also look to create a uniquely compact and irresistibly colored strain of miniature *Odonts* for a market that is largely still untapped??

### ***Oda* (Le Marais X Saint Wood)**

Two seedlings showing the variation in color one can often see in Odont Alliance hybrids. This unregistered hybrid is actually 75% *Oda* Saint Wood, the breeder that Tom Perlite (Golden Gate Orchids) is very fond of. The pod parent, *Oda* Le Marais, was a Ray Bilton hybrid that the EYOF registered in 2008. The other parent of *Oda* Le Marais is *Oda*



Aviewood, a famous Mansell & Hatcher breeder. I find it fascinating that a relatively small pool of proven parents seem to pop up time and again in successful Odont Alliance hybridizing. Far from giving any indication of inbred weaknesses, these key parents seem almost to guarantee a successful hybrid result.



### ***Odm* Rolfeae 4n**

When I comment on the tetraploid strain of this phenomenal *Odont* registered by *Vuylsteke* in 1898, I wonder if my comments are falling on deaf ears! Almost all the pictures I have seen of *Vuylsteke*'s

plants of *Rolfeae* seem to have more intensely colored segments than this strain. So one of the first hybrids I would want to make would be to highly colored modern *Odonts* like *Oda* Joe's Drum or *Wilsonara* John Miller. I have a couple of crosses coming along but my *Rolfeae* 4n parents are in Colombia awaiting my arrival and you can be sure I intend to keep them very busy. What has really impressed me with the tetraploid strain is its substance, its strength of spike and its vigor. A quick search of *OrchidWiz* reveals a mere three hybrids registered from *Odm* *Rolfeae* since 1931! That is both incredible and sad because it is almost certain that those three were bred from a diploid form. Just a couple of decades ago, smart *Odont* enthusiasts would have been begging for a plant or some pollen from a tetraploid *Rolfeae*. . . . has interest in the Odont Alliance sunk this far?

## Support the International Odontoglossum Alliance

by John Miller

For years the International Odontoglossum Alliance (IOA) was supported by two sources of revenue. Members paid annual membership dues of \$15.00 per year and at an annual meeting, often during the time of the San Francisco's Orchid Society's Show at Fort Mason, San Francisco, we held an auction of member-donated Odontoglossum material. The money obtained from dues and the auction went to the IOA treasury. Was this working for covering IOA operating costs? As the membership dwindled and the San Francisco show shrank our income to support the newsletter decreased. While we continued to produce four annual newsletters with quality content, the number of mailings became fewer each year while production and mailing costs increased. Clearly, we needed to rethink our financial model.

A decision was made to significantly decrease costs by taking advantage of the internet. By sending the newsletter as an e-mail attachment we obviated printing and mailing costs. Instead of issuing four annual newsletters the number of issues would henceforth be driven by the volume of contributions of high-quality articles submitted to our editor. We would publish newsletters when we had sufficient material to warrant publication. And, as noted, we would send the newsletter out via email and at no cost to subscribers. This change meant we eliminated our annual dues. A motivation for eliminating dues was to make receiving the newsletter hassle-free to all interested orchid growers and thus offer the potential to learn more about the beauty of the plants and flowers within the Odontoglossum alliance.

Thus, the newsletter is now free to all who request it (to request the newsletter send an email to IOA editor John Leathers, [johnjleathers@gmail.com](mailto:johnjleathers@gmail.com)). And with the establishment of our new website, [www.odontalliance.org](http://www.odontalliance.org), future editions will appear there as well as a link to be added as a recipient.

Have these changes improved things? When we last collected annual dues we had a mailing list of about 70. While we no longer do any mailings of the newsletter our email distribution has grown rap-

idly to more than 150 email addresses, more than-double our last hard-copy mailing and we are now bilingual producing a newsletter in both English and Spanish. And interest in reading the newsletter continues to grow.

However, from the days before these changes only a few hundred dollars remain in our bank account. These funds are used to cover the operating costs of the newsletter. Even though such costs have significantly decreased, costs remain. At the present rate we will eventually run out of funds. We need to plug this whole left in our package of changes. We are asking for contributions from those who receive the newsletter and so far, we have received contributions from several of our members as well as the New Zealand Orchid Society

For those wishing to make contributions you may do so in two ways.

1) Sending a check in US dollars to:

The Odontoglossum Alliance  
John Miller Treasurer  
PO Box 38  
Westport Point, MA 02791

2) Via the IOA PayPal account. Go to the PayPal website, [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com). The IOA PayPal account is: [jemiller49@aol.com](mailto:jemiller49@aol.com). Follow the instructions for making a payment to this account. This is an easy and convenient way to make payment. It also takes care of the money exchange from the currency of residents in other countries facilitating easy conversion to the US dollars we require.

In summary, we continue to produce a quality newsletter, read by a significant and increasing audience, with better image quality than ever before, even though there are fewer editions of the newsletter per year. We have eliminated dues for membership in the IOA and receiving the newsletter which has resulted in a greater interest in the IOA. We are doing our part to keep the IOA going! However, we cannot eliminate all costs; therefore, this solicitation. And, we will continue to look for opportunities to conduct auctions of high quality IOA material to both fund the IOA and to make such material available to our members.

John E. Miller  
IOA Treasurer

## Letter from Peter Sander

The following letter is reprinted by kind permission of Dr. Peter Sander, the grandson of Frederick Sander, originator of Sander's Orchids and Sander's Complete List of Orchid Hybrids, a list entrusted to the RHS for continuation and which has become the International Registry of Orchids. Readers are encouraged to review an extraordinary resource to learn more about Sander found at: URL: <https://www.sandersorchids.com/>

Dear All,

I write as a medical doctor, as an amateur orchid grower and as the 4th generation of the Sander family whose first three generations are responsible for orchidaceae, the largest plant family, being the only one with a hybrid list. Science is paramount in medicine and knowledge of it vital to being a good doctor. However scientific knowledge alone can make a bad doctor. The art of communication is a vital component of any good doctor, as all patients know.

The most important letter in 'RHS' is 'H' for Horticulture.

It is wonderful that since 1961 the RHS has continued to publish Sander's List so effectively and adapted to taxonomic progress. This art of communicating horticulturally continued when Paphiopedilums were separated from Cypripediums. The Cyp house I used to damp down as a boy would have soon killed Calceolus had we had one! The same obviously applies to odonts in an Oncidium house.

A plant label should try to give the sort of horticultural guidance that *Odontoglossum* or 'Odontioda' does, and the consequences of clumping everything into *Oncidium* is very misleading to any grower.

If the science of Clade interpretation or morphology were absolutely certain their would be a case for the RHS to accept this change but, as Stig's tree diagram demonstrates there is a very subjective element in where to cut that 'tree'. I would argue that the present decision is 'art', NOT science and that horticultural decision should prevail.

That Julian Shaw has the dedication and ability in this sophisticated computer age to fulfil his instruc-

tions is very admirable but, for the growers and hybridisers who use Sander's now and will in the future, horticultural clarity must prevail.

Buried, not cremated, in 1920, 1951 and 1975 the original creators of this book would be turning in their graves should the decision not be reversed.

With Sincere best wishes to all who clearly feel so deeply about this,

Peter Sander

## Upcoming Events

The annual Medellin, Colombia flower show will once again be held in August 2018. This show features crafts and flowers with a focus on orchids. Setup for the show begins on Saturday, August 4th, a spectacular gala dinner occurs Monday August 6, at 7 PM and the show opens to the public August 7 at 8 AM and closes August 12 at 8 PM. This is a very large show, the largest annual orchid event held in the Americas with a focus on native Colombian orchids as well as extraordinary species and hybrids from all corners of the earth.

## Save the Date - 2019

Dresden, Germany "International Orchid World" will be held March 28-31. Plans are being formulated for the IOA to participate with a display of *Odontoglossum* alliance flowering plants. Plans for this show are in the early stages. More information will be in subsequent newsletters and on the website.

## Submissions to the Newsletter

Editors:

John Leathers, [johnjleathers@gmail.com](mailto:johnjleathers@gmail.com) , IOA English Edition,

Juan Felipe Posada, [jfelipeposada@gmail.com](mailto:jfelipeposada@gmail.com) , IOA Spanish Edition.

Readers are encouraged to submit articles, notices of events, letters-to-the editor and photos for consideration of inclusion in future editions of the IOA newsletter.

## President's Message -

### Positives and Negatives

"Man, they said we better, accentuate the positive

Eliminate the negative

Latch on to the affirmative

Don't mess with Mister In-Between"

So begins "Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate", a song written in 1944 with music written by Harold Arlen and lyrics by Johnny Mercer. So what are the positives? The word's getting out about the International Odontoglossum Newsletter as pointed out in Secretary John Miller's note in this issue. There's been a rapid increase in subscribers interested in receiving the IOA newsletter. By default newsletter subscribers become IOA members. E-mail subscriptions now surpass 150 with recipients in more than a dozen countries. Thanks to translations by Juan Felipe Posada of Colomborquideas the newsletter is available in Spanish. At this rate of increase readership is likely to surpass 200 by year's end. Our challenge will be keeping newsletter content both topical and interesting. For this we need the help of our readership. Feel free to submit articles or notes, with the attribution of both date and signature to our IOA newsletter editor John Leathers: johnjleathers@gmail.com.

Another positive, as noted in Richard Baxter's submission in this edition, he's created a beta-website and is our Webmaster - hats off to Richard! This opens up lots of opportunity. IOA members are encouraged to log onto the site, test drive it and send Richard suggestions for further development: <http://www.odontalliance.org/> Richard Baxter's e-mail address is: ioaweb@icloud.com. And do note two events encapsulated in this issue worthy of consideration, the Medellin Colombia show in August 2018 and Dresden, Germany in March of 2019!

All positives!

### Negatives

*BREXIT*: it remains to be seen what affect the portmanteau BREXIT, ("British" and "exit") will have on orchid importations for the United Kingdom. At the outset let me comment it is dicey for a foreigner such as myself, and particularly at this point in US

history to comment on another's countries politics; however, as an odont aficionado, with tremendous admiration and respect for the contributions made to the genus by English nurseries I am compelled to share a concern. English nurseries were the dominant players for *Odontoglossum* for most of the last century. It is sad to see these great nurseries disappear. And, like many avocations, ours is a "grey-ing" one in many countries. BREXIT may end the circuitous but effective route of orchid importations for the United Kingdom. European countries, with saner CITES enforcement are often the port of entry for UK orchid imports. Orchid CITES rule within the UK are both bureaucratic and draconian. It will be a sad day for all of us if UK import restrictions hobble their imports. I'll broaden my comment. Orchid hybrids should never have been put on CITES in the first place. Perhaps ironic, a good part of the cause of this is the legacy of someone at Kew Gardens who spent far too much energy and time on RHS junkets railing against the orchid trade.

*Orchid hybrid registrations:* The Royal Horticultural Society's Orchid Hybrid Registration Advisory Group (OHRAG) met in May 2018 to review registrations for *Odontoglossum* and their allied genera. As our readers surely know, taxon changes proposed by botanist Mark Chase led the RHS to conflate *Odontoglossum* and *Oncidium*, subsuming *Odontoglossum* to genera *Oncidium*. OHRAG, with three AOS members officials on the committee rubber-stamped that decision altering and corrupting a Century-old database used by hybridists making it far less useful. The Sander's family, circa 1961 placed Sander's Orchid List in the stewardship of the RHS. Today, it would be called a "database" and databases requires consistency in naming conventions to remain functional. The changes OHRAG imposed now hobble Sander's Orchid List for many orchid genera and certainly for *Odontoglossum*. I am not qualified to comment on how botanists develop classification, particularly now that DNA analysis becomes a resource. However, as an odont hybridizer I am more than qualified to lambast the morons that destroyed hybrid record keeping. As a prelude to OHRAG revisiting their decision I wrote a note of protest to Johan Hermans, its chair. In this note I expressed objections to OHRAG's changes and arguments for restoring the integrity to Sander's Orchid List. Hermans was

decent enough to answer my e-mails and somewhat informative about how OHRAG functions. I argued there are large numbers of botanists who disagree with basing genera solely classifying organisms on the basis of the distribution and composition of chemical substances in them. If this were so humans and chimps would be classified as a single genera no doubt angering the chimps! Hermans replied asking me to back that assertion and cite the “large numbers”? While this may seem like his “gotcha-moment” thinking on his argument made me realize there are not large numbers of botanists on either side of OHRAG’s decision - it is more the case of a storm in a teacup! More important, whatever botanists decide on where to set boundaries, there’s no excuse wrecking what was once a working and useful record system.

A simple solution exists for re-functionalizing Sander’s Orchid List, perhaps a solution that satisfies both camps. Simply add another “field” to the database with one field using and respecting historic registrations and another meeting the mutable whims of botanists. Cogent records of hybrids are in everyone’s interest. While this would be an easy matter for a well-managed database an example being OrchidWiz, ([www.orchidwiz.com](http://www.orchidwiz.com)), the current RHS online search is, to put it kindly, addled. I feel confident stating most orchid hybridizers and judges now rely OrchidWiz rather than RHS for their searches. It will take effort to restore RHS records once again making them an effective search tool.

As of this writing, the decisions of the recent OHRAG meeting have not been made public. Perhaps they are under review? The dire consequences of not rectifying issues are the RHS registration system will likely wither and become a relic. There are already rumblings that future crosses will simply be given names by their hybridizers without registration or revealing parentage. Let’s hope for better from OHRAG; they redeem themselves and reestablish order. If not their decision is likely a self-terminating one.

Robert Hamilton      4 July 2018

(Editor’s comments: replies and rebuttals to articles are encouraged and welcome. I’d be pleased to open a “Letter’s to the Editor” section for our newsletter.)

## Announcing the Establishment of the new IOA Website, [www.odontalliance.org](http://www.odontalliance.org):

We reported in the previous Fall 2017 IOA newsletter that at the General meeting in August of 2017, in Medellin, Colombia, it was agreed to explore creation of our own website. Richard Baxter in England accepted that challenge and our beta-edition was launched in May of this year. Presently, this is very much an embryonic site, which we hope will build gradually, become a valuable resource and archive for growers of Odontoglossums and associated genera. Take a look: [www.odontalliance.org](http://www.odontalliance.org). Feel free to critique the site by providing suggestions to the Webmaster, [ioaweb@icloud.com](mailto:ioaweb@icloud.com) about what you would like to see included as we develop the site. It is our intention to make current IOA newsletters freely available through the IOA website, as well as gradually populating it with previous editions of the IOA newsletters.