

Odontoglossum Alliance Newsletter

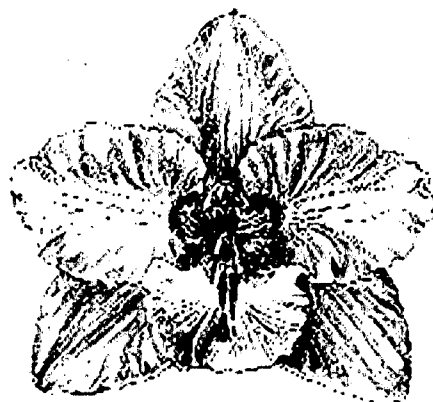
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OA Meeting February 2015

Odontoglossum Alliance Meeting to be Held in San Francisco

19-22 February 2015

The next meeting of the Odontoglossum Alliance will be held in San Francisco at the time of the San Francisco Orchid Show 19-22 February 2015. The Preview Party for the orchid show is on Thursday night, 19 February 2015. We are having a joint meeting with the Pluerothalid Alliance on Friday 20 February.

On Friday February 20 we will be having a tour of the Orchid Zone at the invitation of John Chant, the new owner. We have arranged to have a bus to take us to the Orchid Zone. We will be joining the Pluerothalid Alliance. The bus will seat 40 people and we have allocated 20 seats to the Odontoglossum Alliance and 20 to the Pluerothalid Alliance. The cost is \$30.00 per person. If one alliance does not use its allocation of seats it will then be opened to the other alliance. The bus will leave San Francisco at 9:00 AM and expect to arrive at the Orchid Zone at approximately 11:00 AM. John has both mature and seedling odontoglossums and welcomes our business. We will provide box lunches; the cost of those has not yet been set. This will make it possible to not impose on the OZ while there. We expect to leave about 2:00 PM returning to San Francisco about 4:00 PM. This will be plenty of time to rest, sight see, visit the show at Fort Mason, etc before the pot luck supper, meeting and auction of both alliances at Fort Mason starting at 6:00 PM.

If you want to go on the tour to the Orchid Zone, you need to email Robert Hamilton at roberthamilton@berkeley.edu in order to reserve your seat or seats. Please send Robert Hamilton the names of those that are reserving seats. You can pay when you start the tour. Please send your request for seat or seats and enclose your email address so we can give you the details of where to meet the bus. Both alliances will keep account of their requests for seats and after 16 February if one of the allocations is not filled it will be available to the other alliance. So if you want to go on this tour I urge you to email Bob Hamilton as soon as possible.

The Friday night pot luck supper will be held in a building adjacent to the San Francisco Orchid show in the Fort Mason complex starting at 6:00 PM. Please plan to attend that. We will have two half hour talks, one by each of the alliances. This will be followed by an auction of fine odontoglossum and Pluerothalid material.

The meeting will be held in the Firehouse at the Fort Mason Center. I have included some material on the location in this newsletter. The joint Cool Growers Dinner, lectures and auction will be held in the Fort Mason room C362 (building C third floor). This is the same floor as previous meetings, but a different room. The room is available for setup at 5:00 PM. Featured wines will be served with dinner following. The menu will include choices of roast beef, turkey and vegetarian lasagna. Members of both Alliances living in the area will contribute by providing a variety of specialty dishes. All in recognition of the economic climate to make it as attractive as possible for members to attend. Two talks are planned: One by each of the Alliances (OA and PA). As usual there will be an auction of fine material from both alliances. I expect to see some premium Odont divisions available in the auction.

On 21 February we will have open greenhouses to tour at a number of places including Pacifica with the collections of John Leathers, Tim Brydon and Bob Hamilton and in Berkeley for the collection of Steve Beckendorf. Several venues were considered and the overriding factor was the current economic climate. It is hoped this decision will be attractive to many of our members and that we will have a good turnout.

Tickets to the Preview Party and the show can be obtained over the internet. The address for the web site where these can be ordered is found is:

<http://www.orchidsanfrancisco.org/poe.html>

We expect the cost of the dinner at the meeting to be reasonable. We look forward to a good crowd. In this February newsletter are some details on the meeting. This includes suggestions as to hotel locations close to the show.

The San Francisco Orchid Show is the best show in North America to see Odontoglossum alliance material in the show. The sales area is huge with many opportunities to acquire high quality material.

A good web site to look for hotels is: www.sfravel.com. The specific page is <http://www.sanfranciscovisitor.com/bgt.html>. A selection of hotels picked from the web site follows.

Lombard Motor Inn (415) 441-6000

1475 Lombard St.

Francisco Bay Motel (415) 474-3030

1501 Lombard St.

Redwood Inn (415) 776-3800

1530 Lombard St.

Town House Motel (415) 885-5163

1650 Lombard St.

Star Motel (415) 346-8250

1727 Lombard St.

Cow Hollow Motor Inn* (415)-921-5800

Lombard Street

S F Motor Inn (415) 921-1842

1750 Lombard St.

Coventry Motor Inn (415) 567-1200

1901 Lombard St.

Ramada Limited (415) 775-8116

1940 Lombard St.

Buena Vista Motor Inn* (415) 923-9600

PO Box 475517 San Francisco, CA 94147

Chelsea Motor Inn (415) 563-5600

2095 Lombard St San Francisco, CA 94123

Motel Capri (415) 346-4667

2015 Greenwich St.

Hotel Del Sol (415) 921-5520

3100 Webster St.

These hotels are within a couple of blocks of Fort Mason. These appear to be clean and comfortable, but not elegant. The web site offers reviews of the hotels. The ones marked with an * I have stayed at for previous meetings and shows. They are clean, neat, not elegant, reasonably priced and with parking. I often walked to the show from these hotels.

The meeting to be held on Friday evening will be in the three stories building which is the second one down from the show in the Fort Mason Complex. The address is:

Fort Mason Center

Landmark Building C

Room C362 3rd Floor

San Francisco, CA 94123

Phone 415-345-7500

Request for Auction Material

One of the more interesting and entertaining events at our Odontoglossum Alliance meeting is the auction of fine odontoglossum material. We have had many donators who have brought in fine material. Much of this material has been of plants that are awarded, hard to find species or well know hybrids. Occasionally we have some of the Nellie Roberts watercolors or other fine old orchid illustrations. The results of our OA auction have been used to keep our dues down and provide resources that allow us to increase the size and color content of our newsletters. This newsletter is typical of what can and is being done. I urge all our members whether you plan on attending or not to donate to the auction. If you are not coming so you could bring the material to the dinner, you can mail it to Steve Beckendorf, Steve will get it to the meeting and auction.

So look over your material and find something or if possible a couple of things and get them to the auction and meeting.

Mailing address

Steve Beckendorf

576 Vistamont

Berkeley, CA 98704

COMING A FULL CIRCLE...

Andy Easton.....

As I see the nonsense peddled by Kew and Co. it has become painfully clear that we will soon return to a state reminiscent of the Golden Age of Odonts when hybrids were made and sown in enthusiastic abundance with many names lost forever. My favorite Intergeneric, Vuyls Cambria 'Plush' has a touch of bastardy in its lineage too. The pod parent which was called Clonius had been registered by Charlesworth in 1923. Neither of its parents were registered hybrids, in essence the plant known as Odm Clonius was and will ever be, of unknown ancestry!

On the pollen side, further confusion awaits the unwary. To be a Vuylstekeara, Cambria has to have some Mtps blood. But two Brewii's make for a very convoluted brew. First there was Oda Brewii, the hybrid of Oda Charlesworthii X Odm. harryanum, registered by Charlesworth in 1913. This beautiful Odont has been remade in a tetraploid form by Bob Hamilton and several very attractive selections have resulted from this ultra-rare group of seedlings.

However, But Cambria's pollen parent was a Vuylstekeara known as Vuyls Rudra. RudraIt resulted from the crossing of Vuyls Brewii X Odm Prince Edward which is itself Odm Crispo-harryanum X Odm Rolfeae. See where confusion might arise? So what is Vuyls Brewii? It is the hybrid of Mtps. vexillaria X Oda Brewii. If all this has your mind doing contortions, imagine how confused it all would be if you were silly enough to follow the supposed RHS name changes with large numbers of redundantly-named hybrids under genus Oncidium. I am happy to say that I am one of many who completely ignore Chase et. all. and his sycophantstopsy-turvey conflations. and if at some time in the very near future, we market various Intergenerics under trade names, just consider you are no worse off than you might have been back around the turn of the 20th Century!

Think too that the bold showy lip of Vuyls Cambria 'Plush' actually was inherited from the enigmatic Odm. harryanum and not, as some ill informed gnorant AOS judges think, Mtps. vexillaria. What happened to Vuyls Brewii? Well it was used in a dozen hybrids made by Charlesworth up until 1946 but has never been heard of since. One of those hybrids was Vuyls Lutetia and Vuyls Lutetia 'Stonehurst' was the second greatest Vuylstekeara I have ever seen. I use the past tense because sadly, as far as I know, this lovely orchid is totally extinct.

(You might mention you have resumed breeding with a 4n Oda Brewii, thus hope springs eternal)

Andy Easton

January 19, 2015

andy.easton@sbcglobal.net



Odm George McMahon was registered by Bruce Cobbledick, formerly one of the leading lights in Odont growing in the Bay Area. The cross was Odm Parade 'Goldilocks' X Odm Golden Rialto. I have seen a number of clones of Golden Rialto and some were alba and others were normal yellows though likely alba carriers. I was always curious as to whom George McMahon was, as the cross is really good. I wondered why he was no longer growing Odonts in particular. Well sadly, I found out George is deceased, one of a large group of orchid enthusiasts lost to the Aids virus. I am not sure of the ploidy of George McMahon but it has good vigor and a reasonable number of successful progeny. The pictured robust plant is at Colomborchideas in Rio Negro.

When tidying up factual data for this note, I came across a hybrid named Gay Fairchild which was registered as Odm George McMahon X Oda Shelley. It was supposedly made by Ray Bilton but in fact it was our hybrid, from flasks sent to Floricultura in the late 1990's. I am not accusing the late Ray Bilton of stealing a registration as I see the registrant was John Gay, an English Odont enthusiast. Ray was reduced to travelling to Holland and buying culled Odont seedlings in the latter days of his nursery named Orchid Answers and John would have been totally unaware of the origin of the plant. Besides it saved either Floricultura or Geyserland a registration fee!



What is this pretty flower? What species influence is dominant? Is one parent *Odm. harryanum* or *Odm. wyattianum*? What characteristics do you think would lead you to decide one way or another? I will be a little cheeky and say that the name I have given the plant is "Howard's Mistake"! It was supplied to Colomborquideas as *Cyrt. macranthum* X *Cyrt. edwardii* and I am just a little suspicious that this may not be the correct parentage.....! Would you use such a plant in hybridizing? Well I certainly did. The color was warm and the plant habit was compact with a spike on each side of the bulb. If all the *Odont* names are to become meaningless, maybe "Howard's Mistake" is as good a name as any for this cute thing.





ODONTOGLOSSUM MULTISTELLARE V.S. ODONTOGLOSSUM DIGITATUM

Stig Dalström*

2304 Ringling Boulevard, unit 119, Sarasota FL 34237, USA

Research Associate:

Lankester Botanical Garden, University of Costa Rica, Cartago, Costa Rica

National Biodiversity Centre, Serbithang, Thimphu, Bhutan

stigdalstrom@gmail.com; www.wildorchidman.com

Odontoglossum multistellare Rchb.f., was first collected in 1863 by Richard Pearce in the dense and seasonally very wet forests of central Peru. He found the plant either near the village of Chinchao, which is located just north of the Carpish tunnel in the Huanuco region, or somewhere in the general area with the same name as the village, which is south of the Carpish tunnel where this orchid is still fairly common despite threats from heavy deforestation. The German professor Heinrich Gustav Reichenbach officially described *O. multistellare* in Linnaea 41: 25, 1877, and the name refers to the multitude of star-shaped flowers on the type specimen, today deposited in the herbarium of the Museum of Natural History in Vienna, Austria.

Pearce collected a variety of plants for the Veitch nursery during several trips to South America, and he did not particularly focus on orchids (Veitch, 1906). He was probably not able to send living plants of *O. multistellare* to his employer because it was not mentioned by Veitch (1887) and this species has remained rare in live collections and herbaria until modern times. The botanically rich area of Huanuco was also visited by the Spanish explorers Hipólito Ruíz and José Pavón, together with the French botanist Joseph Dombey and their accompanying artists in the late 1800th century. Unfortunately, most of their collections burned, disappeared in the Atlantic Ocean or was destroyed in some other way, and only a fraction of their orchid specimens ever reached Madrid (Schultes & Arango, 1998).

Odontoglossum digitatum was described by Charles Schweinfurth (1945) based on a single collection by César Vargas from the seasonally wet cloud forests of Pillahuata, east of Paucartambo in the Cusco region. Despite the artistically well executed illustration by Gordon Dillon that accompanies the original description, and the on-line available photograph of the type specimen in the Oakes Ames Orchid Herbarium at Harvard, I have never been able to convincingly interpret the true identity of this taxon. Based on the general shape and description of the flower I long suspected it to be a synonym of *O. multistellare*. But the short inflorescence, in combination with the rather unclear rendition of the column and lip structures on the type illustration, left lingering clouds of doubt in my mind. What has also baffled me is that Schweinfurth never compared *O. digitatum* with *O. multistellare*. Both *O. digitatum* and *O. multistellare* are included in Schweinfurth's treatment of the orchids of Peru (1961), where the type illustration of the former occurs, and a reference to a drawing of the latter species in the Ames Herbarium (based on Reichenbach's type specimen in Vienna).

So when it was time to create an itinerary for the 2014 trip to Peru, I decided that it was long overdue to solve this enigma once and for all, if possible. So our group of enthusiastic orchid nerds, consisting of Guido Deburghgraeve, Steve Beckendorf, Howard Liebman and myself, together with our Peruvian host Saúl Ruíz set out from Cusco on a misty November morning.

The sky was covered by ominous looking rainclouds as we were heading east and the first heavy drops soon began to explode on our windshield. The weather did not improve as we approached the quaint little town of Paucartambo, where we found a rustic place to spend a couple of nights. What really made a positive addition though, was the nearby bakery, which produced very tasty bread in a continuous flow.

The area where César Vargas collected the type plant of *Odontoglossum digitatum* is protected today by the establishment of the large *Parque Nacional del Manú*. This meant that we needed to be observant of where we were going, not to break any rules or upset the wardens that patrol the park. Because of the rain and incredibly dense vegetation on both sides of the road that borders the park, we spent most of the day just walking along the road and scanning the nearby trees for flowering plants. It turned out that we really did not have to go far to discover some interesting plants growing on the road cuts. Flowering specimens of *Cyrtochilum aureum* and *C. tetraplasium* were frequent and also an un-identified *Cyrtochilum* of the former “*Neodryas*” complex. It did not take long, however, for our eagle-eyed Master orchid spotter Saúl to discover a beautifully flowering plant of the recently described *Odontoglossum auroincarum* on a mossy branch, and perfectly displayed for our cameras. Back in the bus again we did not continue more than a few hundred meters before both Saúl and I spotted something in flower that fluttered by on our right side. Marco stepped on the brakes and we tumbled out of the bus eager to examine what we had seen. And long and behold, not more than a few meters away was a gorgeous and different *Odontoglossum* plant in flower. The altitude of about 3200 meters was right and the locality of Pillahuata was dead-on for the type collection of *Odontoglossum digitatum*. Could it possibly be...?

It did not take long to recognize the attractive and very distinctive flowers of *Odontoglossum multistellare*, and there was no doubt about the true identity of “*O. digitatum*” any longer. The flowering plant matched the type specimens of both *O. multistellare* and *O. digitatum*, and the type locality of *O. digitatum*, which confirms the treatment of this taxon as a synonym of the widespread *O. multistellare*. The Manú observation also connects the type area for *O. multistellare* in the Huanuco region with the southernmost observations of this species in the Chapare region of Bolivia.

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_____. 1961a. Orchids of Peru, *Feldiana*, Bot.: Vol. 30(4): 829—831, 850, 851.
Veitch, J and Sons. 1887. *A manual of orchidaceous plants*, vol. 2, *Odontoglossum*. Royal Exotic Nursery, 544 King's Road, Chelsea, UK.
_____. 1906. *Hortus Veitchii*, A History. James Veitch & Sons Limited, Chelsea, London, UK.

Figure captions:

- Fig. A: Traditional bread baking, Paucartambo.
Fig. B: The local bakery makes visiting Paucartambo worthwhile.
Fig. C: Manú National Park.
Fig. D: Dense and wet forest at Pillahuata is the type area for *Odontoglossum* “*digitatum*”.
Fig. E: *Cyrtochilum aureum* is common along the roads.
Fig. F: *Cyrtochilum tetraplasium* is also locally very common.
Fig. G: *Cyrtochilum tetraplasium* is attractive in a modest way.
Fig. H: Un unidentified *Cyrtochilum* near Pillahuata.

Fig. I: A specimen plant of *Odontoglossum auroincarum*.

Fig. J: Flowers of *Odontoglossum auroincarum*.

Fig. K: *Odontoglossum multistellare* in the type area for its synonym *O. digitatum*.

Fig. L: Flowers of *Odontoglossum multistellare* (syn. *O. digitatum*).

Fig. M: *Odontoglossum multistellare* from Junín, Peru.

Fig. N: *Odontoglossum multistellare* from Chapare, Bolivia.

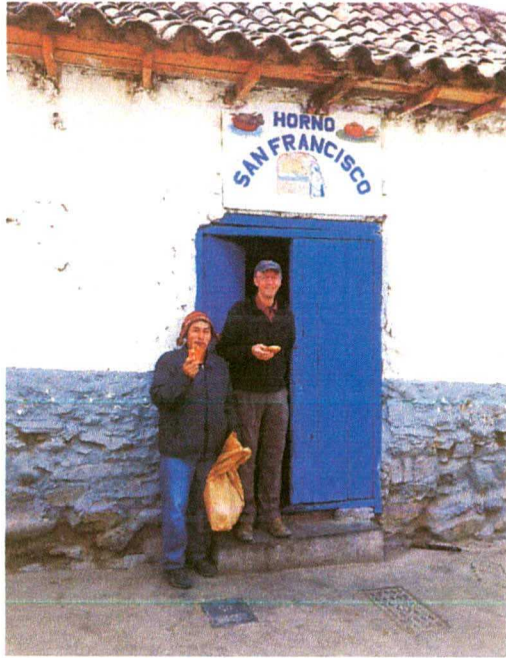


Fig A Traditional bread baking. Paucartambo



Fig B The local bakery makes visiting Paucartambo worthwhile



Fig C Manu National Park



Fig D Dense and wet forest at Pillahuata is the type area for *Odontoglossum digitatum*



Fig E *Cyrtorchilum aureum* is common along the roads



Fig F *Cyrtorchilum tetraplastum* is also locally very common

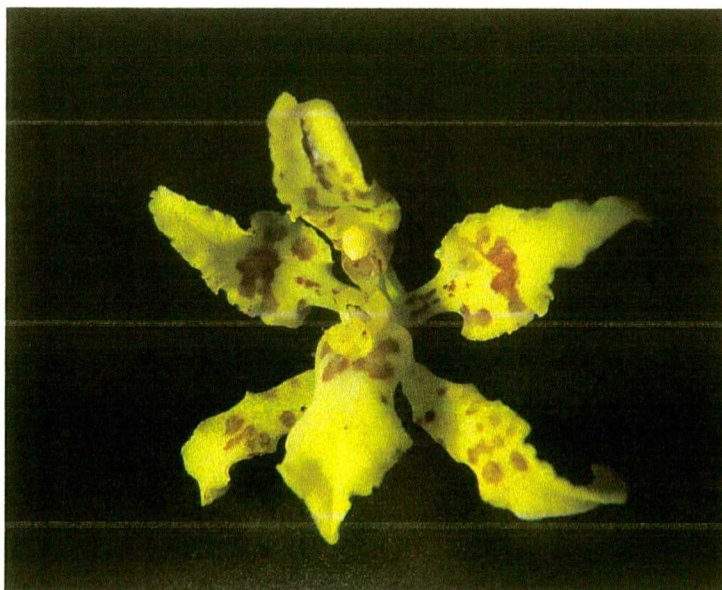


Fig G *Cyrtorchilum tetraplastum* is attractive in a modest way



Fi H Un unidentified *Cyrtorchilum* near Pillahuata



Fig I A specimen plant of *Odontoglossum auroincarum*



Fig J Flowers of *Odontoglossum auroincarum*



Fig K *Odontoglossum multistellare* in the type area for its synonym *O. digitatum*



Fig L Flowers of *Odontoglossum multistellare* (syn. *O. digitatum*)



Fig M *Odontoglossum multistellare* from Junin, Peru



Fig N *Odontoglossum multistellare*
from Chapare, Bolivia